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EC to remove same voter ID numbers across States

Poll panel says it will ensure each voter gets a unique EPIC number, blames manual method employed earlier for duplication; Trinamool says panel's admission proves charge of fraud

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI/KOLKATA

Taking cognisance of reports that certain electors in one State have voter ID numbers matching those issued in another State, the Election Commission on Sunday said irrespective of the number on the elector photo identity card (EPIC), a person could vote only at the designated polling station in the constituency in a State or Union Territory where he or she was enrolled.

The EC, however, said it would remove the duplication and ensure that each voter got a unique number. The 10-digit number is printed on the ID card issued to each elector.

> Irrespective of the EPIC number, electors can cast a vote only at their designated polling station... Any case of duplicate EPIC number will be rectified by allotting a unique EPIC number
> ELECTION COMMISSION

> Election fraud of EPIC proportions! Mamata Banerjee warned how BJP was hijacking democracy, and now EC's own admission proves her right
> TRINAMOOL CONGRESS

In a statement, the commission said: "It is clarified that while EPIC numbers of some of the electors may be identical, the other details including demographic details, Assembly Constituency and polling booth are different for the electors with the same EPIC number."

On February 27, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee alleged that the BJP, with the blessings of the commission, was adding voters from other States to the West Bengal voter list. She cited a few EPIC numbers of people of the State being linked to those living in Haryana, Gujarat and Punjab. Some social media posts too have made the allegation.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

U.K., other nations will work on Ukraine deal: Starmer

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

The U.K. will work with France and other countries to arrive at a peace deal between Ukraine and Russia and present that to U.S. President Donald Trump. This sequence of events was outlined by U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Sunday, following unprecedented scenes from the Oval Office on Friday, where an argument erupted between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and U.S. President Donald Trump and Vice-President J.D. Vance.

"We've now agreed that the United Kingdom, along with France and possibly one or two others, will work with Ukraine on a plan to stop the fighting, and then we'll discuss that plan with the United States," Mr. Starmer said during a BBC interview on Sunday. Mr. Starmer had spoken with Mr. Trump, French President Emmanuel Macron as well as Mr. Zelenskyy and they had agreed to the new sequence of play towards a deal, he said.

After the acrimonious interaction in Washington, Mr. Zelenskyy was received warmly in London on Saturday, welcomed by Mr. Starmer with a hug outside No.10 Downing Street. The two men held bilateral talks ahead of Sunday's summit meeting between European leaders, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Turkish foreign minister Hakan Fidan and NATO chief Mark Rutte.

Peace plan: Keir Starmer and Volodymyr Zelenskyy arrive to attend a summit at Lancaster House in central London on Sunday. AFP

> We've now agreed that the United Kingdom, along with France and possibly one or two others, will work with Ukraine on a plan to stop the fighting, and then we'll discuss that plan with the United States
> KEIR STARMER, U.K. Prime Minister

Following the Summit, Mr. Starmer said the countries had agreed a four-step process that would involve continued aid to Ukraine and economic pressure on Russia. The process would also require Ukraine to have a seat at the negotiating table.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

NEARBY

KERC seeks help to decide on tariff for RAT system

BENGALURU
After announcing the Rooftop Aero Turbine (RAT) project, the KERC is now finding it difficult to determine the tariff for the same. It has invited proposals from stakeholders for this purpose. » PAGE 2

DKS's comment against film industry flayed

BENGALURU
A day after Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar issued a veiled threat to the fiilm industry, his comments attracted condemnation from the Opposition. » PAGE 4

BJP to take out protest march to Vidhana Soudha

BENGALURU
BJP leaders have decided to take out a march to the Vidhana Soudha to register the party's protest against the alleged insult to Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot by the State government. » PAGE 7

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 7

Kerala man killed in Army firing in Jordan

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Police on Sunday confirmed the death of a man from the State in firing by the Jordan Army in February-end. They identified the deceased as Thomas Gabriel Periera from Thiruvananthapuram. Periera's neighbour and travel companion, Edison, was injured.

The police said Periera was part of a four-member group on a visiting visa to Jordan, possibly to scout for jobs.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

4 more bodies found; avalanche toll up to 8

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

The death toll in the Uttarakhand avalanche rose to eight on Sunday after the rescue operation concluded with the recovery of four bodies of Border Roads Organisation (BRO) workers. The operation lasted for around 60 hours. The workers got buried in snow after an avalanche hit the road project site at Mana village, the last village in Uttarakhand on February 28. Twenty-three workers were pulled out safely.

FULL REPORT » PAGE 10

Property tax: After BBMP lists 608 sites for auction, 555 owners clear outstanding dues

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

Fearing the auction of their properties by Bengaluru's civic body over pending property tax dues, a large number of defaulters, whose properties were listed for auction, cleared their dues within a few days.

According to BBMP data, out of 608 properties listed for auction, 555 owners cleared their outstanding dues. The auction was initially scheduled for February 13, but was postponed as no bidders turned up. However, the announcement itself acted as a deterrent, prompting defaulters to settle their arrears to safeguard their properties. This has yielded ₹18 crore in revenue for the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).

BBMP Special Commissioner (Revenue) Munish Moudgil stated that the civic body would continue efforts to recover dues from the remaining defaulters.

The civic body has made arrangements to auction an additional 3,000 properties. In the first batch of defaulters, the total arrears stood at ₹20 crore, of which BBMP has successfully recovered 90% of the outstanding. Mr. Moudgil expressed confidence in recovering dues from all defaulting properties across Bengaluru.

The auction was initially scheduled for February 13, but was postponed as no bidders turned up. FILE PHOTO

The BBMP intensified its recovery efforts after the expiry of the one-time settlement (OTS) scheme in November 2024. In January 2025, the civic body attached 81,644 properties. As of January 4, the total number of defaulters stood at 2,06,753, with outstanding dues amounting to ₹329.15 crore.

Following the conclusion of the OTS scheme, BBMP began issuing notices to defaulting property owners. The OTS, launched in February 2024, had provided significant relief by waiving compounding interest on arrears and reducing penalties by 50%. Originally set to end in July, the scheme was first extended until September and later, in response to public demand, was further extended to November 30.

With tax recovery efforts continuing, the civic body is now focusing on stricter enforcement measures, including auctions, to ensure compliance and enhance revenue generation.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has collected ₹4,541.75 crore in property tax so far in the financial year 2024-25, achieving an overall collection efficiency of 87.17%. The civic body ramped up tax recovery efforts following the expiry of the one-time settlement (OTS) scheme in November 2024.

According to BBMP data, Mahadevapura zone recorded the highest collection of ₹1,207.60 crore (92.25% of demand), followed by the East zone at ₹762.02 crore (85.44%). Yelahanka stood out with the highest percentage collection at 98.15%, totaling ₹437.01 crore. Other zones, including West (₹510.70 crore), South (₹657.53 crore), and RR Nagar (₹361.93 crore), also contributed significantly.

Health Dept. issues advisory amidst rising temperature

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

As the mercury rises across the State, the Health Department on Sunday issued an advisory including precautions, signs to look out for and dos and don'ts to follow during the summer season.

For the general public, the advisory suggests being hydrated, wearing loose cotton clothes, using hats, umbrellas and traveling during the cooler times of the day (morning and evening) rather than in the hotter hours of the afternoon (12 p.m. to 3 p.m.).

Heat stress

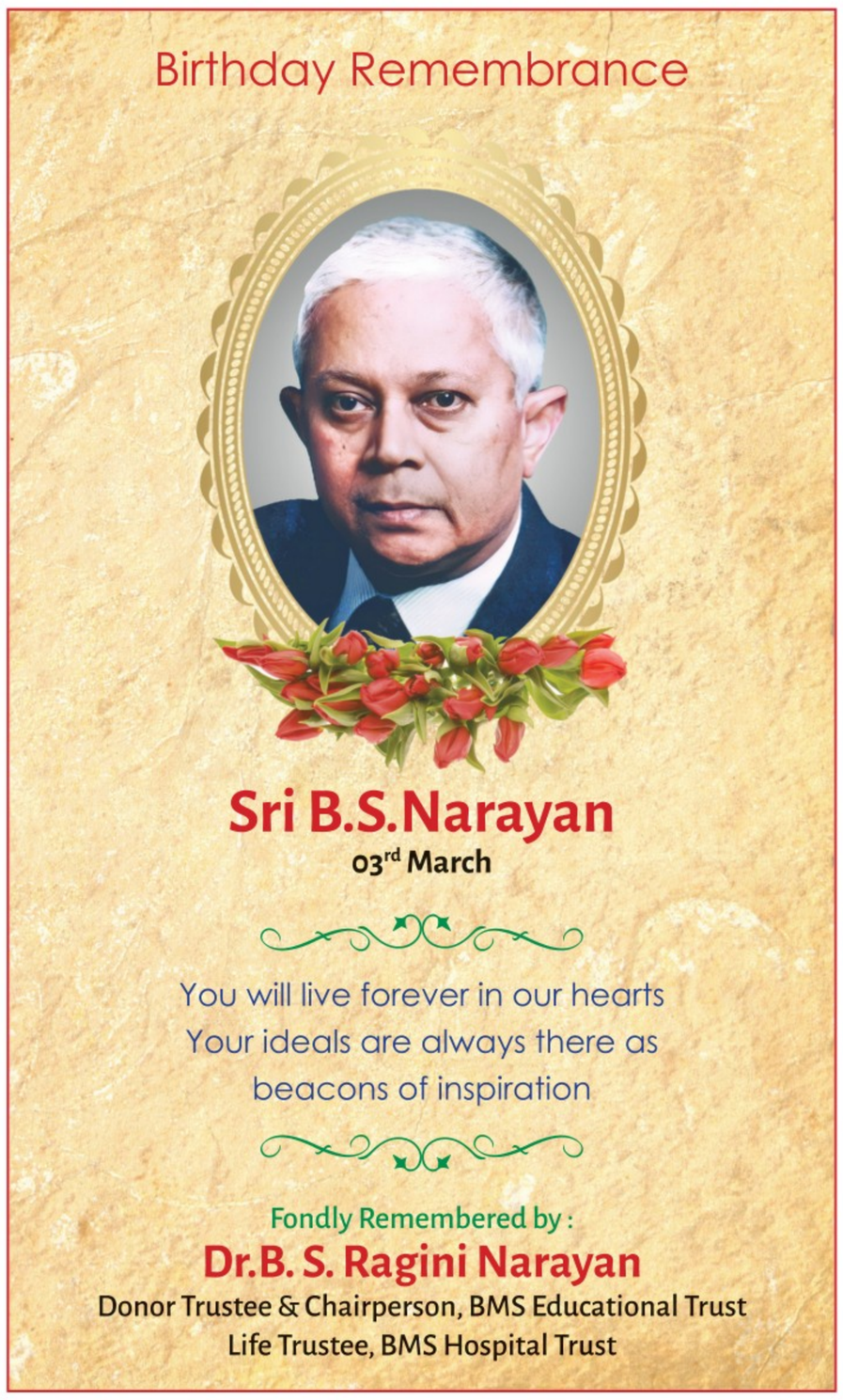
"Normal human body temperature ranges between 97.5-degrees Fahrenheit to 98.9-degrees Fahrenheit. Exposure to high outdoor and indoor temperatures can induce heat stress, directly and indirectly, leading to heat-related illnesses. Heat-related illnesses include heat rash, heat oedema, heat cramps, heat tetany, heat syncope, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat stress may also exacerbate chronic diseases like cardiovascular, respiratory and kidney diseases," the advisory says.

The advisory also says that heat-related illnesses are preventable. It also says that if anyone feels unwell and experiencing any symptoms of extreme heat, then they should move to a cool place and drink liquids. If someone experiences muscular spasms, then they should rest and hydrate with ORS and get sufficient medical attention. However, a heat stroke is a medical emergency.

The department has also identified infants and young children, pregnant women, those working outdoors, people with physical (especially high blood pressure and heart disease) and mental illnesses and those travelling from cooler to hotter climates.

"If such persons are visiting during a heatwave, they should allow a week's time for their bodies to acclimatise to the heat and should drink plenty of water. Acclimatisation is achieved by gradual increase in exposure/physical activity in hot environment," the advisory added.

It also offers specific guidelines for employers which include providing cool drinking water and shade and taking other necessary precautions for the safety of employees.



A work-in-progress in Tests, the real deal in ODIs — the Gill conundrum

The 25-year-old's outstanding numbers in One-Day International cricket suggest he could hold the key for India at the business end of the ICC Champions Trophy. But looking at the big picture, he will have to crack the code as a Test batter to garner greater global acceptance as a distinguished talent

REUTERS

Vivek Krishnan

In full flow, Shubman Gill's bat, adorning a blue sticker of sponsor *CEAT* on the front and back, can seem less like a piece of wood and more like a magic wand. Such is the nonchalance and grace with which he wields that willow of his. Nowhere does he do it more adeptly than in the 50-over format, where his ranking of No. 1 in the International Cricket Council's batting charts reflects his pre-eminence.

Over the past month, Gill's dominance in this version has been reinforced in striking fashion. Opening the batting alongside Rohit Sharma, the 25-year-old has strung together a run of significant scores by dovetailing a bit of pragmatism with oodles of regal elegance. It has got cricket pundits waxing lyrical about his one-day game.

Since India's ODI series against England began on February 6, Gill has crossed fifty in four out of six matches, which includes three outings in the ICC Champions Trophy. His only real blip came against New Zealand in Dubai on Sunday when he was trapped leg-before by Matt Henry on two. Be that as it may, he has registered match-winning hundreds twice in this purple patch and followed up with that now characteristic celebration where he unstraps his helmet, his jet-black hair slicked back, and bows down with his right arm tucked behind to acknowledge the applause of the audience.

Elegant response

The elegant response whenever he reaches the three-figure mark, which he has done eight times in 53 ODI innings, sits well with his understated persona and exquisite batting traits. Soft-spoken off the field and stately in his movements on it, Gill's run-making revolves around sweet timing without compromising on the aesthetics of his craft. Blessed with a long reach – he stands at 6 feet and one inch – he makes up for his minimal footwork by seemingly getting into position a split-second faster than most and then meeting the ball under his eye with that free-flowing bat swing.

His knock of 46 against Pakistan in the ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai was a glimpse of Gill at his very best. Though the vice-captain fell just shy of a half-century, there were an array of strokes in that offering that simply took your breath away.

Having just witnessed Rohit being castled by a yorker in Shaheen Afridi's previous over, a less gifted batter may have just looked to bide his time against the mercurial left-arm pacer. Gill, instead, flipped the pressure right back on Shaheen with three fours in the seventh over of the run chase. Two of them were utterly sumptuous and worthy of repeat viewing, his trademark short-arm pull over midwicket being bettered by a jaw-dropping straight drive two deliveries later. Freeze the frame on his drive down the ground and notice how Gill just leans forward and presents a high front elbow without looking to overhit or bludgeon the ball.

Style without substance, however, is futile at the highest level. What Gill is doing in ODIs is also racking up imposing numbers. In 53 ODIs, he has amassed 2,736 runs at an average of 60.80 and a strike rate of 100.36. No batter, in this format's history, has had a better average in their first 53 ODIs. If not for the dwindling relevance of this format possibly altering the landscape going forward, Gill seems to be well on his way to becoming a colossus in one-day cricket in much the same way Rohit and Kohli are.

Gill's pedigree in this format has been established by striking a lovely balance between attack and defence. In contrast to Rohit, who has changed his mindset and willed himself to go after the bowling from the outset, the lanky batter from Punjab likes to size up the opposition attack before pressing the throttle. Even when he struck a 149-ball 208 against the Black Caps in January 2023, for example, his first 23 runs took 36 deliveries. Crucially, Gill rarely fritters away starts in this format, infusing confidence therefore that he will eventually catch up and feast on the bowling.

Troubles in Tests

For the time being, though, effusive praise for Gill will have to be confined to this white-ball variety. For him to garner greater global recognition as a batter of rare quality, he will have to shore up his game in the toughest format. After 59 Test innings, he is yet to hit the heights that were expected once he announced himself with a majestic 91 in his third game at the Gabba in January 2021. Gill's aggregate in whites is a middling 35.05.

His struggles were encapsulated by his output when India played Australia in Sydney in the final Test of a five-match series in the first week of January. Having returned to the team after being omitted from the fourth Test in Melbourne, he made 20 and 13 before suffering horrendous lapses in judgment in both innings. His dismissals, unlike his silken strokes in the ongoing Champions Trophy, didn't quite make for a joyous watch. In the first dig, he had put in the hard yards to chew up 63 balls before stepping out to Nathan Lyon off the final delivery before the lunch break and edging to Steve Smith at slip.

Second time around, with Rishabh Pant just beginning to counter-attack, Gill couldn't resist joining in. He decided to charge at medium-pacer Beau Webster and hoick across the line, only to get a faint inside edge to Alex Carey behind the stumps.

Finishing the Test tour of Australia with 93 runs in five innings at 18.60 undermined a lot of the progress he had actually made in the format in 2024. Before the series Down Under, he was averaging 47.41 from 10 Tests in the calendar year. But by not finding a way to surmount the challenges in the oceanic country, Gill has invited uncomfortable questions on his technique and temperament for the longest version.

Wasim Jaffer, who had the know-how to craft big hundreds against the red ball, weighed in on Gill's predicament. Jaffer is Punjab's coach in domestic cricket and observed Gill from close quarters when the latter played a Ranji Trophy game against Karnataka in Bengaluru in January after returning from Australia.

"In ODI cricket, he knows how to get runs. He has found that formula," Jaffer, 47, told *The Hindu*. "On pitches that spin or where there is sideways movement, it's different. But he is a very fine player. He wants to improve and wants to be the best. He spends a lot of time in the nets. He is somebody who is always open to ideas. I feel with time, he is going to be one of the best players. With his work ethic, he is going in the right direction."

In a tangle

As Jaffer alluded, when the ball deviates in the air or off the seam, Gill tends to get himself into a tangle. Not someone who takes a big stride forward, Gill's trigger movement is a minor back-and-across shuffle, and he is often lured into accessing the ball outside off-stump with his hard hands. It leads to edges that invariably carry to the slip cordon. With his bat prone to coming down at an angle from gully, the nip-backer has also unsettled him in the past.

These aspects will be put through a rigorous examination in a few months when India tours England for another five-Test series. But according to Jaffer, the reason for Gill's strange dismissals in Sydney was down to the matter circulating in his head rather than the nitty-gritty of batting technique.

"It is more mental than technical. What goes on in your head at that point of time makes you do such things," the former India opener said. "But not just him, everybody else also had a tough time (in Australia). But he will be fine. He will be looking forward to continuing to do well in the Champions Trophy and then the IPL. England is going to be a big challenge for him."

That is a given. But before he navigates his shortcomings against the moving ball in the English summer, an opportunity to spearhead India's charge to another ICC title beckons in Dubai. It should spur Gill to unfurl some more magic with his bat at the business end of this Champions Trophy.

THE GIST

- Over the past month, Gill's dominance in the 50-over version has been reinforced in striking fashion
- For him to garner greater global recognition as a batter of rare quality, he will have to shore up his game in the longest format
- Before Gill navigates his shortcomings against the moving ball in the English summer, an opportunity to spearhead India's charge to another ICC title beckons in Dubai

KERC seeks stakeholders' help to determine Rooftop Aero Turbine system's tariff

Commission says no other power utilities have determined RAT tariffs for comparison purposes

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

After announcing the ambitious Rooftop Aero Turbine (RAT) project under which electricity consumers can install a small-scale wind energy plant to harness wind and produce electricity, the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) is now finding it difficult to determine the tariff for the same for the financial year 2025-26.

The RATs can be installed by consumers either with solar rooftop photovoltaic (SRTPV) systems or even without them. However, unlike SRTPVs whose generation profile is generally predictable, due to various factors like region, presence of high-rise buildings, etc., it is not easy to predict wind generation.

The KERC adds that no other power utilities have determined RAT tariffs for comparison purposes.

In case KERC does not receive any proposals from stakeholders, the tariff will be determined on a project-specific basis to promote RATs with or without solar systems . FILE PHOTO

"Unlike solar PV, which has established benchmarks for capital costs, capacity utilisation factors (CUF), and tariff structures, rooftop aero turbines lack reliable data for regulatory consideration. Since no utility-scale or commercial RAT projects exist, it is impractical to assume a standard capital cost," said officials from KERC. They added, "Wind patterns in urban and semi-urban areas, where rooftop installations would be placed, differ significantly from utility-scale wind farms."

The KERC also noted that if the RATs are installed with SRTPVs, then the tariff should include both technologies, their CUFs and investments. "Since there are no existing projects, industry stakeholders, investors, and technology providers need to provide inputs on feasibility, cost structures, and expected performance," the commission said. The stakeholders are mainly required to propose the capital costs as the KERC has already proposed a few factors for tariff determination. These factors include life of the plant (which is assumed to be 25 years), CUF, capital cost, operation and maintenance cost among others.

In case the commission does not receive any proposals from the stakeholders, then the tariff will be determined on a project-specific basis to promote RATs with or without solar systems.

KERC had announced that consumers can get these RAT systems installed on their buildings a few months ago to encourage decentralised and sustainable power generation and reduce the dependency on grid-based power to enhance energy security.

Those who are interested in submitting their comments and proposals can either post them to the secretary of KERC or email kerc-ka@nic.in on or before March 18.

Mahindra Percussion Festival concludes

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The second and final day of Mahindra Percussion Festival 2025 in association with *The Hindu* may have comprised only two concerts, but they represented percussive forms like few other artists in the country.

The festival kicked off with the uptempo performance of SNAX – the Chennai duo comprising multigenre drummer Ramkumar Kanakarajan and Sumesh Narayanan. Both accomplished artists in their own right, Kanakarajan brought his rock, metal, fusion and electronic drumming approach to Narayanan's energetic mridangam, among other drums.

Drawing from and incorporating styles like dubstep, metal, Tamil kuthu beats and South Indian film soundtracks, they were performing from their 2024 debut album *Thrillex*, which has earned praise from master percussionists like Sivamani. Narayanan told the audience about the significance of being invited as the Mahindra Percussion Festival paid tribute to Ustad Zakir Hussain this year: "This one is very special to us. We've spent a lot of time listening to his music."

Ramkumar Kanakarajan and Sumesh Narayanan, of the musical duo 'SNAX', performing at the Mahindra Percussion Festival 2025 in Bengaluru on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Where SNAX explored a more modern pallette, veteran artist Ranjit Barot and theatre director Roysten Abel's Beat Route took attendees back in time to explore Rajasthani and Kerala folk music traditions.

Beat Route brought audio-visual storytelling through folk percussion instruments like kartaal, morchang, bapang, nagada, dhol, and cheep represented by Rajasthani artists, while chenda, mizhavu and elathalam were representing Kerala.

Abel is behind theatrical music productions like *The Manganiyar Seduction*, and he has teamed up with Barot, who was behind the drumkit at the festival. Joining a total of 10 instrumentalists and vocalists, Barot kept a steady, groovy beat throughout.

Debuting in October 2024 in Bengaluru, Beat Route has since travelled to New Delhi and found one of the most appropriate settings at the Mahindra Percussion Festival, held at Prestige Srihari Khoday Centre for Performing Arts in Konanakunte.

Technique to enhance next-generation lighting developed

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Researchers at the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CeNS) in Bengaluru have developed a new technique to enhance next-generation lighting.

According to the Department of Science and Technology, currently, emerging light-related technologies like Organic LEDs (OLEDs) that offer vibrant colors, QLEDs that provide precise colour control and durability and micro/mini-LEDs that deliver high brightness and stability, are shaping the future of lighting.

"While thin and flexible OLEDs are costly and have shorter lifespans, QLEDs are toxic and their production is challenged by resource scarcity and Micro/Mini-LEDs are limited in their application due to high production costs," the Department said.

Perovskite LEDs

It further added that Perovskite (class of compounds which have the same type of crystal structure as CaTiO3 - Calcium Titanate) LEDs (PeLEDs) combine the advantages of OLEDs and QLEDs, positioning them as an excellent choice for next-generation lighting. "However, their widespread application is limited by challenges such as sensitivity to heat and moisture, as well as colour instability caused by anion migration (which occurs when halide ions - chloride, bromide, or iodide - move between quantum dots in mixed layers)," it added.

CeNS researchers have developed an innovative method to minimise anion migration in $CsPbX_3$ perovskite nanocrystals.

The team, led by Pralay K. Santra, synthesized green light emitting cesium lead bromide ($CsPbBr_3$) perovskite nanocrystals using a hot injection method, where oleylamine serves as the passivating ligand. "To enhance stability, they applied argon-oxygen ($Ar\text{-}O_2$) plasma treatment, which immobilizes the surface ligands by creating a cross-linked, hydrophobic layer. This approach effectively stabilizes the ligands and slows anion exchange, significantly improving colour stability by several orders," the department said.

This breakthrough has been published in the journal *Nanoscale* and provides valuable insight into stabilising perovskite nanocrystals, in turn paving the way for efficient, durable optoelectronic devices.

Celebrating films

Film enthusiasts waiting to catch various screenings at the 16th Bengaluru International Film Festival at Orion Mall in Bengaluru on Sunday. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

Award for KSRTC

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The KSRTC has been recognised at Governance Now 11th PSU National Awards for its leadership and self-reliance. V. Anbukumar, MD, received the PSU Atmanirbhar Leadership Award.

Man found dead in car

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A man was found dead in a parked car near a bridge in Kodigehalli on Saturday.

The deceased has been identified as Ashwin Kumar, 42, a resident of Mutyala Nagar. He was employed in a private firm.

The incident came to light when the family complained to the police after Ashwin did not return and even his mobile phone was not reachable. Based on the complaint, the police located Ashwin by tracing his mobile phone. They found that the car was locked from inside, and he was motionless. The police broke open the window and shifted him to a nearby hospital where he was declared dead.

The family lodged a complaint, as they found a burn mark on his hand. The police have filed an Unnatural Death Registry (UDR) report and are awaiting the post-mortem report to ascertain the cause of death.

A similar case was reported in HAL police station limits when a techie was found dead in a parked car last week.

Santosh Prasad, 37, a resident of Indiranagar and an employee at a private firm in the city, was on his way to work when he reportedly experienced chest pain while stuck in traffic.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 05/2025 Date: 25.02.2025

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders through IREPS only for supply of following items: **Tender Closing Time : 10:30 Hrs.**

Sl.	Tender No.	Description in Brief	Qty	Tender Due on
01	29251717	Main Compressor with mounting accessories along with motor.	11 Nos.	08.03.2025
02	33241291A	Flex Ball Cable - Short (L-2333 MM)	102 Nos.	17.03.2025
03	29242037	Set of Labyrinth and bearing cap driving end (DE) for WAP7 TM type 6FRA 6098 (A)	151 Sets	18.03.2025
04	29251076	Traction Motor Blower including Motor	48 Nos.	19.03.2025
05	65245003A	Design, supply and installation of: a) Heavy Duty Pallet Racking system	1 Set	25.03.2025
		b) Cage Pallet	350 Nos.	
		c) Metal Pallet	150 Nos.	

For Tender No. 33251354 of Notice No. 04/2024, Due date for opening of Tender changed from 07.04.2025 to 10.03.2025

For Tender No. 45251078 of Notice No. 03/2024, Due date for opening of Tender changed from 24.02.2025 to 13.03.2025

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

PUB/816/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25 **Principal Chief Materials Manager, Hubballi**

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಸಣ್ಣ ನೀರಾವರಿ ಮತ್ತು ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ
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ಇ-ಮೇಲ್: midhly@yahoo.co.in ಫೋ.ನಂ: 08284-220113
ನಂ:ಕಾನಿಅ/ಸಸಿವಿಹ/ತಾವಿ/ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್/4702/2702/2024-25/1819 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 27/02/2025

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

(ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್) ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ-1&2

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿಸಿ ನವೀಕರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಐಟಂ ದರದಲ್ಲಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ-2000 ಮತ್ತು ಇತ್ತೀಚಿನ ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿಗಳಂತೆ **KW- 1 & 2** (ದ್ವಿ-ಲಕೋಟೆ) ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ "ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನ" ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ.

(1) ಇಂಟೆಂಡ್ ನಂ: 4917 (2) ಇಂಟೆಂಡ್ ನಂ: 4904 (3) ಇಂಟೆಂಡ್ ನಂ: 4903 (4) ಇಂಟೆಂಡ್ ನಂ: 4902 (5) ಇಂಟೆಂಡ್ ನಂ: 4901 (6) ಇಂಟೆಂಡ್ ನಂ: 4900 (7) ಇಂಟೆಂಡ್ ನಂ: 4899 (8) ಇಂಟೆಂಡ್ ನಂ: 4898 (9) ಇಂಟೆಂಡ್ ನಂ: 4897 (10) ಇಂಟೆಂಡ್ ನಂ: 3455 2ನೇ ಕರೆ

ಖಾಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ ಫಾರಂಗಳನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ ವೆಬಸೈಟ್ ವಿಳಾಸ: **"https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in"** ದಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 04-03-2025 ರ ನಂತರದಿಂದ ಡೌನಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕುರಿತಂತೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 10-03-2025 ರೊಳಗಾಗಿ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟೀಕರಣಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಚೇರಿ ಅಥವಾ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಿ ಪರಿಹರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರಗಳನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 11-03-2025 ರ ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 05.15 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು. ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 12-03-2025 ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 05.30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಟೆಂಡರನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಅರ್ಹತಾ ಮಾನದಂಡಗಳನ್ನು ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ-1&2 ಬಿಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ ರಲ್ಲಿರುವಂತೆ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು ಹಾಗೂ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ವಿವರಗಳೇ ಅಂತಿಮ.

ವಿ.ಸೂ: ಸದರಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/- (ಎಂ. ನಾಗರಾಜ)
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು
ಸಣ್ಣ ನೀರಾವರಿ ಮತ್ತು ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ,
ಹಳಿಯಾಳ ವಿಭಾಗ (ಉ.ಕ)

DIPR/ADK/KSMCA/931/24-25 Dt.01.03.2025

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No: E-GSU-ELE-2024-25-OT-14
Dated: 24.02.2025

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Item of work	Approx. Value
Conversion of existing 66 kV DC Hoody LILO Line infringing the proposed Quadrupling of Track near Hoody Halt Station in between Ch. No. 337/800 - 337/900 to proposed 132kV Class 1000 Sq.mm U.G. Cable.	Rs. 12,39,00,011.20

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 20.03.2025**

For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Gati Shakti Unit/ Bengaluru

PUB/813/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No: B/TRD.2024-25/32
Dated: 24.02.2025

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Item of work	Approx. Value
[i] Modification of OHE due to construction of proposed ROB No. 286A at Km. 118/000 - 100 between Marandahalli - Rayakottai (MZU-RYC). **[ii]** Modification of OHE due to construction of proposed ROB No. 291A at Km. 120/000-100 between Rayakottai - Periyanagathunai (RYC-PRNT) stations.	Rs. 19,50,345.76

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 18.03.2025**

For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution/Bengaluru

PUB/814/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General public hereby informed that my client is intending to purchase the below mentioned Schedule property from Smt. G. R. Bhat, residing at No. 33, 4th Cross PMK Road, T Dasarahalli, Bengaluru-560057.

If anybody is having any objections, claim, interest, dispute for the above intended sale transactions, he/she/they may contact the undersigned with the documentary proof substantiating his/her/their, objections/claim/disputes within **7 (Seven)** days from the date of publication. Failing which, my client will proceed with to complete the sale transaction with the above owner as if there are no third party claims/objections/disputes in respect of the Schedule Property and thereafter no claims/ objections/ disputes will be entertained.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel property Residential Building bearing **Site No. 33**, Khata: **PID No. 173/13/33**, having **900 Sq. Ft**. built up RCC roofed house, totally measuring **30 feet** from east to West and **40 Feet** from North to South, i.e. **1200 Sq. Ft altogether**. Situated at 4th cross, PMK road, Prashanth Nagara, T. Dasarahalli Village, Yashavantapura Hobli-2, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru-560057 and bounded as:

East by : Private Property bearing site No. 32,
West by : Private Property bearing site No. 34,
North : Road, South : Private Property bearing site No. 22

Sd/- **P.R. Associates**
Praveen Danageri, Advocate
Having office at office at No.10/35, Shravana, 2nd Floor, Devi Park Extention, Malleswaram 16th Cross, Bengaluru 560003.
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Euclid space telescope discovers new 'Einstein ring' in nearby galaxy

All Einstein rings have great scientific value, but Altieri's ring is extra special because it has been observed in a well-studied nearby galaxy, NGC 6505. Only five other gravitational lenses at similar distances have been found so far. Altieri's ring is composed of the distorted images of another galaxy 4.5 billion lightyears away

Smriti Mahajan

In the middle of this image, the fuzzy-looking bulb of light in a warm shade of yellow extends around a small bright spot, nestled within a thin light circle that appears to be drawn closely around it. The circle is an Einstein ring. ESA/EUCLID/EUCLID CONSORTIUM/NASA

THE GIST

Recently the Euclid space mission spotted an Einstein ring in the galaxy NGC 6505. An astronomer named Bruno Altieri first noticed this Einstein ring in September 2023 in a blurry image captured by Euclid, which ESA had launched only two months earlier

Einstein predicted that light will not travel on a straight path in the vicinity of massive objects. A massive object in the foreground of a light source acts as a gravitational lens, distorting and amplifying light in the same way a magnifying glass distorts the path of light

Euclid began to scan the sky formally on February 14, 2024, and is expected to discover 100,000 new gravitational lenses. Its chances of discovering lenses so close to the earth, however, remain slim because of the smaller volume of the universe available to look in

More than a century ago, Albert Einstein predicted that massive objects like large galaxies and clusters of galaxies act like giant lenses in space by bending light from distant objects.

As seen from an observer on the earth, a rare alignment of a background object with such a lens in the foreground can lead to a visual spectacle. Because of the lensing, the observer sees arc-like structures skirt the foreground lens. Sometimes these arcs are arranged in a circular pattern, which is called an Einstein ring.

Altieri's ring

Recently, the Euclid space mission of the European Space Agency (ESA) spotted an Einstein ring in the galaxy NGC 6505, just 590 million lightyears from the earth. This may sound like a long distance, but on the astronomical scale, the galaxy is veritably in our cosmic backyard.

An astronomer named Bruno Altieri first noticed this Einstein ring in September 2023 in a blurry image captured by Euclid, which ESA had launched only two months earlier.

The image was unfocused by design because in the initial days of the mission, scientists were taking data to test if all of Euclid's systems were functioning properly. Subsequent images of the galaxy yielded focused images, using which scientists confirmed the presence of the ring. It has since been nicknamed Altieri's ring in honour of the scientist who stumbled upon it.

A quirk of the light

Einstein predicted that light will not travel on a straight path when moving in the vicinity of massive objects. He argued that a large object distorts spacetime – the fabric of space and time around it – just like the curvature of a hammock is determined by the mass of the person sitting in it.

This idea forms the basis of Einstein's famous general theory of relativity, which the American physicist John Wheeler summed up perfectly in the following words: "matter tells spacetime how to curve, and curved spacetime tells matter how to move."

The massive object in the foreground, called a gravitational lens, distorts and amplifies the light coming from background sources in the same way a magnifying glass distorts the path of light scattered by a background object, like small lettering on a piece of paper.

That said, a gravitational lens is not as perfectly shaped as a magnifying glass and may produce multiple images of the background object. The number of images depends on the relative distance between the lens and the observer, between the lens and the background object, and the latter's alignment with the lens.

This quirky cosmic phenomenon is called strong gravitational lensing. The multiple images can appear in a variety of configurations around the lens and can assume slightly different shapes and sizes depending on the distribution of matter in it.

An Einstein ring is a special case of strong gravitational lensing. Astronomers discovered the first Einstein ring in 1998, more than 80 years after Einstein predicted their existence. An Einstein ring is created when a gravitational lens distorts light coming from a distant background object, like a star or a galaxy, in such a way that the multiple images created in the foreground form a circular pattern around the lens. This requires a near-perfect alignment between the distant object, the lens, and the observer.

A new set of eyes

All Einstein rings have great scientific value, but Altieri's ring is extra-special because scientists have observed it in a well studied nearby galaxy, NGC 6505. Scientists have found only five other gravitational lenses at similar distances so far. Altieri's ring is composed of the distorted images of another galaxy 4.5 billion lightyears away.

Since NGC 6505 has been known to astronomers since the 19th century, the

An Einstein ring is a case of strong gravitational lensing. Astronomers discovered the first ring in 1998, 80 years after Einstein predicted their existence

ring's discovery shows how turning new telescopes to old targets can still yield valuable new knowledge.

The study of Einstein rings can also provide new insights into the universe's expansion and provide opportunities to test the theory of general relativity and investigate distant objects that are otherwise obscured.

They can also help astronomers understand the nature of dark matter, a mysterious form of matter that comprises around 30% of the total mass-energy budget of the universe yet remains undetected because it doesn't interact with the normal matter of which you and I are made. The presence of dark matter can only be inferred from the gravitational effect it has on matter surrounding it – or by bending light around itself.

One of a kind, probably

Following the discovery of Altieri's ring in September 2023, Euclid scientists further investigated this system for more insights using other telescopes. This way, for example, data from the Keck Cosmic Web Imager (KCWI) obtained in March 2024 confirmed the lensed nature of the images.

Together with data from the archives of the Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope and the Dark Energy Spectroscopic Instrument, scientists also confirmed the total mass of stars and the distance to NGC 6505 and the lensed galaxy. They found that the latter is an old galaxy no longer forming stars.

While the discovery of Altieri's ring so early in Euclid's life is exciting for the mission, its scientists sounded caution in a paper published in *Astronomy & Astrophysics* on February 10: "... the exceptional nature of Altieri's lens means it is unlikely that Euclid will find another lens" closer than around 680 million light-years "with a ring as bright as that observed here."

Euclid began to scan the sky formally on February 14, 2024, and is expected to discover 100,000 new gravitational lenses in the universe. Its chances of discovering lenses so close to the earth, however, remain slim because of the smaller volume of the universe available to look in.

This said, the discovery of Altieri's ring highlights Euclid's potential and the role it can play in advancing our understanding of dark matter.

(Smriti Mahajan is an astronomer and science communicator promoting STEM education through astronomy. mahajan.smriti@gmail.com)

BIG SHOT

Reused plastic bottles hang from a tree during a "climate march" by volunteers on the banks of the Yamuna River to raise awareness about the need for a cleanup of the river and other environmental issues in New Delhi on March 2. PTI

WHAT IS IT?

Planetary parade: worlds on show

Vasudevan Mukunth

In a small window of time around February 28, people on the earth were in for a visual treat as seven planets, plus the moon, lined up in the night sky. These events are called planetary parades because the planets seem to line up, one behind the other, in the night sky in the order of their distance from the sun.

Depending on the number of planets involved, planetary parades can be common or rare. For example, a parade of three or four planets occurs once every few years, whereas a parade of seven or eight planets is very rare. The parade around February 28 was of the latter variety, involving seven planets: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune.

The closer planets were visible to the naked eye, but the farther ones, especially Uranus and Neptune, required telescopes to see.

The next such line-up is only expected in 2040, involving six planets.

Planetary parades are not particularly significant to scientists but they can create a visual spectacle. GETTY IMAGES

Planetary parades are not particularly significant to scientists. The reason why they happen is simple: the planets of the solar system all orbit the sun in roughly the same plane, called the ecliptic plane. So as they move in their orbits, every once in a while some of them will be visible together from the earth. This wouldn't have been possible if the planets were moving around in different orbits.

(mukunth.v@thehindu.co.in)

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to
science@thehindu.co.in
with the subject 'Daily page'

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, MAR. 03	
RISE 06:34	SET 18:29
RISE 08:55	SET 21:48
TUESDAY, MAR. 04	
RISE 06:34	SET 18:29
RISE 09:42	SET 22:48
WEDNESDAY, MAR. 05	
RISE 06:33	SET 18:29
RISE 10:33	SET 23:51

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	33	24
Mysuru	33	20
Bengaluru	33	21

Bengaluru Today
32°C Morning will be slight cool with mist and haze. Day will be little warm. Night also will be slight cool. Dry weather to prevail.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
33°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be warm. Night also will be cool and hazy.

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THE HINDU
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BDA issues single tender for asphalting six blocks of NPKL

Upset site allottees say a single contract for such a vast area can lead to further delays in work

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Site allottees of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout (NPKL) are up in arms over the Bangalore Development Authority's (BDA) issuance of single tender for asphalting of all roads in six blocks of the layout. They argue that this move will lead to unnecessary delays.

The newly-floated tender covers Blocks 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, and 9, with completion period stipulated as 24 months. Allottees, however, find this timeline unjustifiable, especially since BDA has repeatedly claimed that 80% of the infrastructure work is already complete.

BDA has claimed that 80% of the infrastructure work in Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout has been completed. FILE PHOTO

Suryakiran A.S. of NPKL Forum said that a key concern is the inefficiency of a single contract for such a vast area. He argued, "If BDA had opted for multiple tenders – one for each block – different agencies could have worked simultaneously, completing the asphalting work in as little as four to five months. Instead, the single-tender model risks extending the project unnecessarily, delaying site handovers even further." He added that completion may go beyond two years.

The frustration is further fueled by the recent history of failures in NPKL's asphalting projects. In December 2022, BDA floated three separate tenders for Blocks 5, 6, and 7, with agencies engaged by February 2023. However, even after more than a year, work in these blocks remains incomplete. It seems to be happening sequentially rather than simultaneously, significantly slowing down progress, preventing allottees from constructing homes, he said.

Adding to this is the inconsistency in BDA's approach. A contrasting example is the Dr. Shivaram Karanth Layout, where nine agencies were assigned to different blocks, ensuring faster completion. In NPKL, however, BDA initially opted for a two-agency model and has now shifted to a single-agency approach for six blocks, raising questions about the logic behind such an inefficient strategy, another allottee said.

A senior BDA official said the authority maintained that a single tender approach is doable for NPKL and hence decided on the same. The allottees may have some concerns, but the BDA will ensure speedy completion of the works, he assured.

Woman arrested for stealing valuables in crowded buses

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Huliyar police of Tumakuru district on Sunday arrested a labourer from Koratagere and recovered stolen valuables worth ₹10.05 lakh from her.

Alamelamma, 25, used to steal valuables from passengers in crowded buses.

On January 9, she stole gold valuables from a passenger named Rajeshwari. The police tracked her down using the local intelligence network.

City's healthcare system criticised

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Members of Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist) have condemned the quality of care patients receive in government hospitals while also highlighting issues with medical inaccessibility. They had organised a citizens' convention on public health on Sunday.

Sudha Kamath, Medical Service Centre, president, Karnataka, critcised Bengaluru's "medical tourism model", arguing that its advanced treatments are inaccessible to the working and middle classes who fund the State. "There is historical precedent for government-run, free healthcare and it was successful in post-Independence India when elements of socialist medicine were implemented. Socialist medicine is a system prioritising accessible, equitable healthcare for all," she said.

Participants also condemned the dominance of private entities in the healthcare sector and how the economically-weaker sections have to struggle even to avail themselves of basic healthcare.

M.N. Sriram, Bangalore South District Secretary, SUCI (C), condemned the shift towards individual responsibility for health, fueling corporatisation and private dominance (70%) of the healthcare sector. He highlighted the plight of low-wage migrant workers and even middle class in the "start-up capital," unable to afford good healthcare. He also said that the budget of Ayushmann Bharat scheme, which is ₹9,400 crore is limited and India's health spending is just 1.8% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

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11-HIGH ONGC OFFICE COMPLEX,
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NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Description : Hiring the Preset Mooring Services for 6 numbers of Wells in East Coast for Anchor Moored rig for a period of 360 days

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) invites Expression of Interest for hiring the Preset Mooring Services for 6 numbers of Wells in East Coast for Anchor Moored rig of 500m water depth capability for a period of 360 days, as per the schedule described below:

Start Date of EOI	01.03.2025
Last date for submission of Expression of Interest document and confirmation by the firms for attendance on the day of EOI Meet	On or before 10.03.2025, 15:00 Hrs (IST)
Expression of Interest Meet	18.03.2025, 11:00 Hrs (IST), and also in virtual mode
Venue for EOI Meet	8th floor Conference Hall, 11-High ONGC Complex, Mumbai

For details of Expression of Interest (EOI) and downloading the Brief Scope of Work and other documents, please logon to our website at http://tenders.ongc.co.in.

For any queries, please contact:

Name: Vivek Dixit Mobile: +91-9969223707 email: dixit2_vivek@ongc.co.in	Name: Nikhil Kosambia Mobile: +91-9485138577 email: kosambia_nikhil@ongc.co.in

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

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Mind our language — the variances in Hindi and English speaking across India

Data shows that people in non-Hindi States are more willing to learn and speak new languages, while the same cannot be said for those in the Hindi belt. Moreover, those in the south have gravitated towards English as the secondary language, with the share of Hindi speakers remaining stagnant, which explains why resistance to policies such as the three-language formula is more pronounced in the south

Sambavi Parthasarathy
Vignesh Radhakrishnan

In the south, a higher share of people opted for English as their additional language, with only a marginal increase in Hindi speakers. In contrast, in western and eastern States, the increase in English speakers was relatively modest

The latest exchanges between Tamil Nadu and the Centre over Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) funds has reignited the long-standing language debate. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has reaffirmed the State's opposition to Hindi imposition and reiterated its commitment to the two-language policy.

Meanwhile, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has dismissed these allegations. "Tamil is one of the oldest languages of our civilisation. But what is wrong if a student in Tamil Nadu will learn multilingual aspect in education? It can be Tamil, English and other Indian languages. There is no imposition of Hindi or any other language ," he had said in February.

If we strip away the details, the core tension once again revolves around a question that has long gripped non-Hindi-belt States – especially those in the south – whether implementing the three-language formula indirectly imposes Hindi. An equally important question arises–regardless of whether the three-language formula amounts to an imposition–does data on development indices make a stronger case for English as the link language over Hindi?

Put differently, should native Hindi speakers be encouraged to learn English for broader access and mobility, or should non-Hindi speakers be asked to learn Hindi, for their supposed "benefit"?

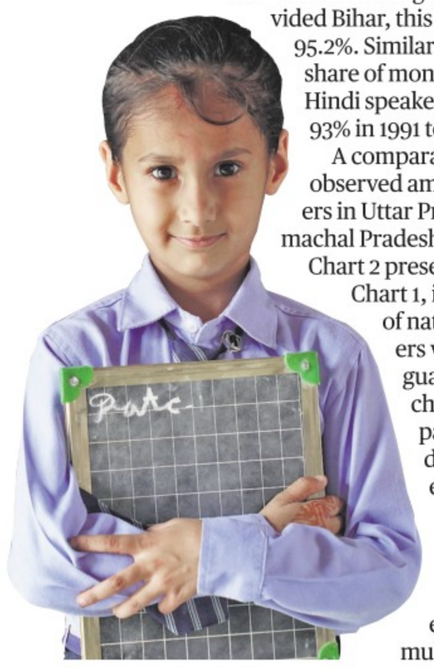
Multilingualism among States

First, data indicates that non-Hindi speakers are generally more open to learning new languages, whereas Hindi speakers exhibit lower multilingualism. Chart 1 presents the share of monolinguals–individuals who speak only their native language (first language/mother tongue)–across select States. For instance, in 1991, 84.5% of native Tamil speakers in Tamil Nadu (those who speak Tamil as their first language in the state) were monolingual, a figure that dropped to 78% by 2011. Similarly, the share of native Odia speakers in Odisha who were monolingual declined from 86% to 74.5%. Similar trends can be observed among Marathi speakers in Maharashtra, Punjabi speakers in Punjab, Gujarati speakers in Gujarat, Telugu speakers in Andhra Pradesh, and other non-Hindi-speaking States, indicating a steady shift toward multilingualism.

In contrast, States where Hindi is the predominant first language already had a high share of monolinguals, and in many cases, this share increased over time. For instance, in 1991, 90.2% of Hindi speakers in undivided Bihar were monolingual. By 2011, in divided Bihar, this figure had risen to 95.2%. Similarly, in Rajasthan, the share of monolinguals among Hindi speakers increased from 93% in 1991 to 94.3% in 2011.

A comparable trend can be observed among Hindi speakers in Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh as well.

Chart 2 presents the inverse of Chart 1, illustrating the share of native language speakers who are bi- or trilingual. Together, these charts reveal a clear pattern: non-Hindi speakers are generally more open to learning new languages, whereas native Hindi speakers show a lower tendency toward multilingualism.



English as a choice

With this pattern established, Charts 3 and 4 examine the choice of second and third languages among multilinguals in each State. Chart 3 shows the share of English speakers among native language speakers in 1991 and 2011. For example, in Tamil Nadu, 13.5% of native Tamil speakers also spoke English in 1991, a figure that rose to 18.5% by 2011. In contrast, in Haryana, the share of native Hindi speakers who also spoke English declined from 17.5% to 14.6% over the same period.

A similar trend of declining or stagnating English proficiency can be observed across several Hindi-belt States, while non-Hindi-speaking States saw an increase in English speakers. Notably, the sharpest rise in English proficiency occurred in Tamil Nadu, Odisha, and Punjab, whereas the increase was more modest in States like Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Chart 4 shows the share of Hindi speakers among native language speakers in each State between 1991 and 2011. For instance, in Tamil Nadu, only 0.5% of native Tamil speakers also spoke Hindi in 1991, a figure that rose slightly to 1.3% in 2011. In Karnataka, the share of native Kannada speakers who also spoke Hindi remained stagnant at around 8.5% across both years.

In contrast, the share of native language speakers who also spoke Hindi saw a significant increase in Gujarat and Maharashtra. In Gujarat, the proportion of native Gujarati speakers who also spoke Hindi rose from 21.6% in 1991 to 39% in 2011. A similar trend was observed in Maharashtra, where the share of native Marathi speakers who also spoke Hindi grew from 35.7% to 43.5%.

Charts 3 and 4 establish another clear pattern: the choice of second and third languages varied significantly across non-Hindi-speaking States. In the southern States, a higher proportion of people opted for English as their additional language, with only a marginal increase in Hindi speakers. In contrast, in western and eastern States, the increase in English speakers was relatively modest, while the number of people acquiring Hindi grew significantly.

This divergence helps explain why resistance to Hindi is more pronounced in the southern States, while opposition remains more muted in other regions.

Hindi or English

This brings us back to the core utilitarian question: which language best equips citizens in their pursuit of better opportunities? A comparison of Human Development Index (HDI) scores across States and Union Territories reveals a clear trend–regions with a higher share of English speakers tend to have higher HDI scores (Chart 6), while States with a greater proportion of Hindi speakers generally exhibit lower HDI scores (Chart 5). This suggests a positive correlation between a higher standard of living and a greater prevalence of English proficiency.

Migration data further reinforces this pattern. Reports from the Economic Advisory Council to the PM and the Multiple Indicator Survey indicate that a significant number of people from Hindi-speaking States are moving to non-Hindi-speaking regions in search of better economic opportunities. This trend suggests that States with higher English proficiency and better development indicators are attracting more migrants – another factor which bats for English to be the link language and not Hindi.

CHART 1: The chart presents the share of monolinguals—individuals who speak only their native language (first language/mother tongue)—across select States. ● 1991 ● 2011

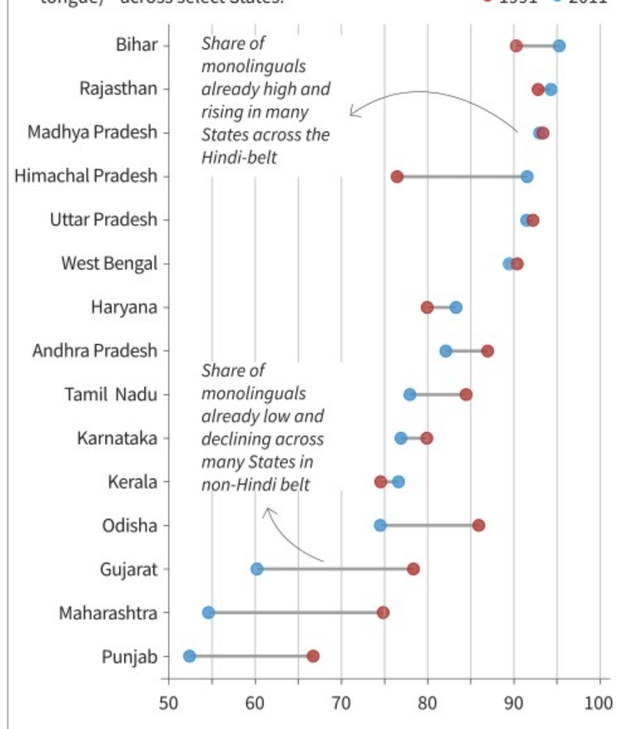


CHART 2: The chart presents the share of bi/trilinguals—individuals who speak at least one language other than their native language (first language/mother tongue)—across select States. ● 1991 ● 2011

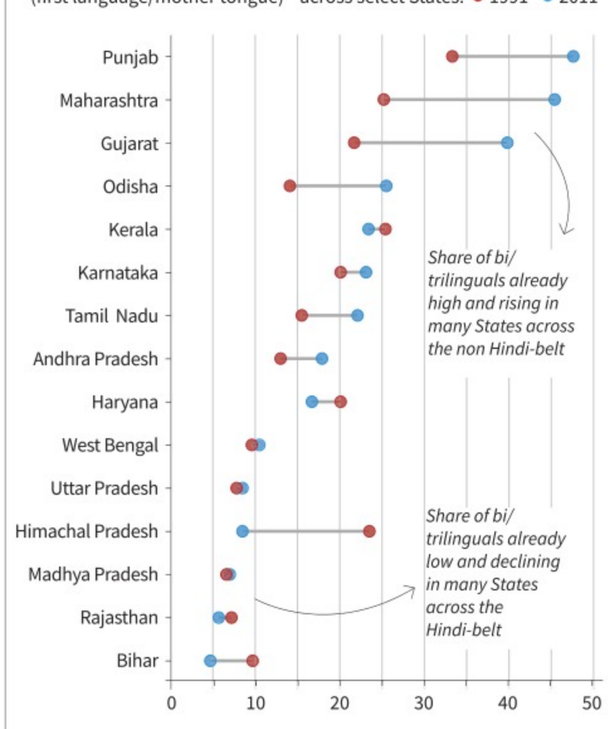


CHART 3: The chart shows the share of English speakers among native language speakers.

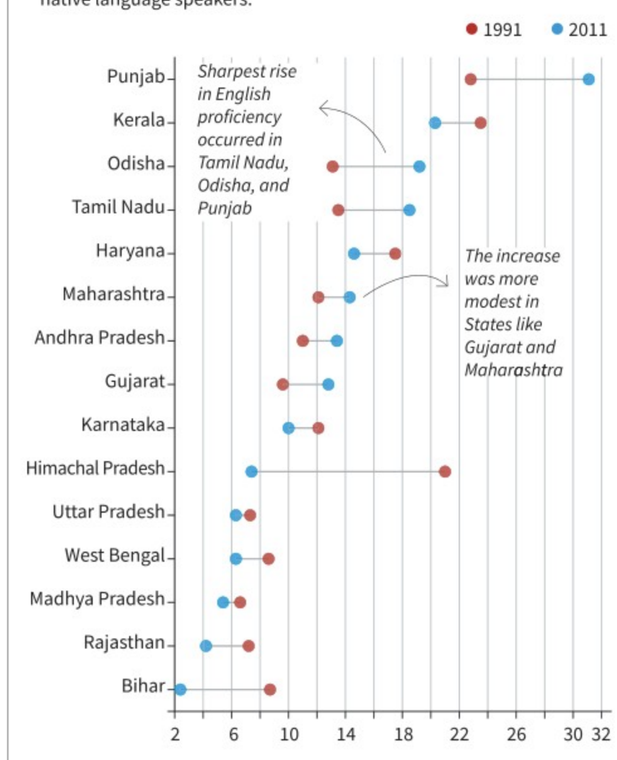
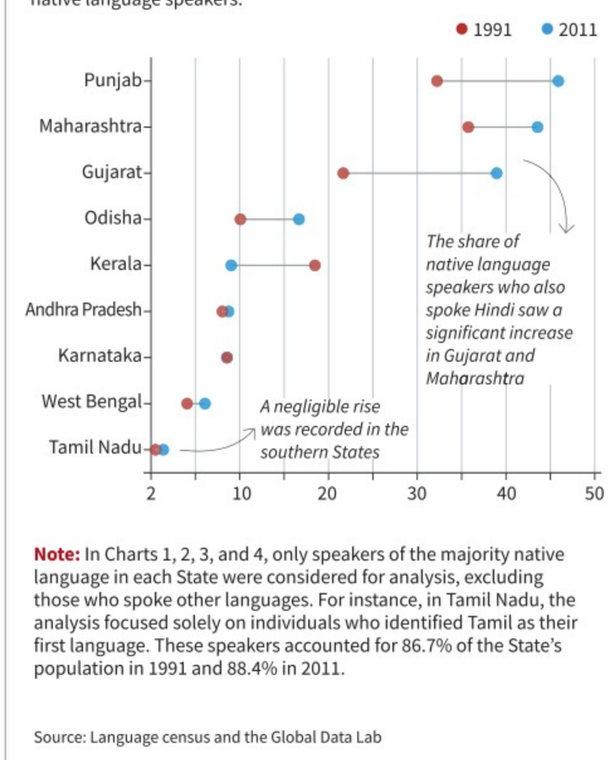


CHART 4: The chart shows the share of Hindi speakers among native language speakers.



Note: In Charts 1, 2, 3, and 4, only speakers of the majority native language in each State were considered for analysis, excluding those who spoke other languages. For instance, in Tamil Nadu, the analysis focused solely on individuals who identified Tamil as their first language. These speakers accounted for 86.7% of the State's population in 1991 and 88.4% in 2011.

Source: Language census and the Global Data Lab

CHART 5: The chart plots the share of Hindi speakers in 2011 against the HDI scores in 2022. The bigger the dot, the higher the population in the State

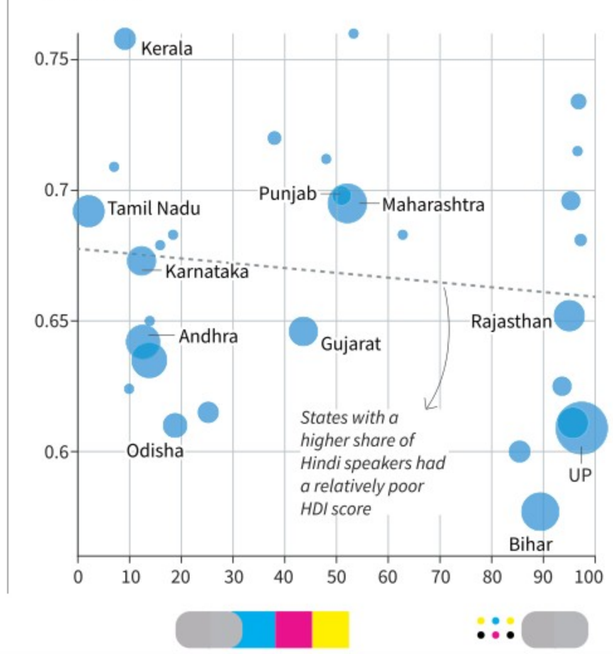
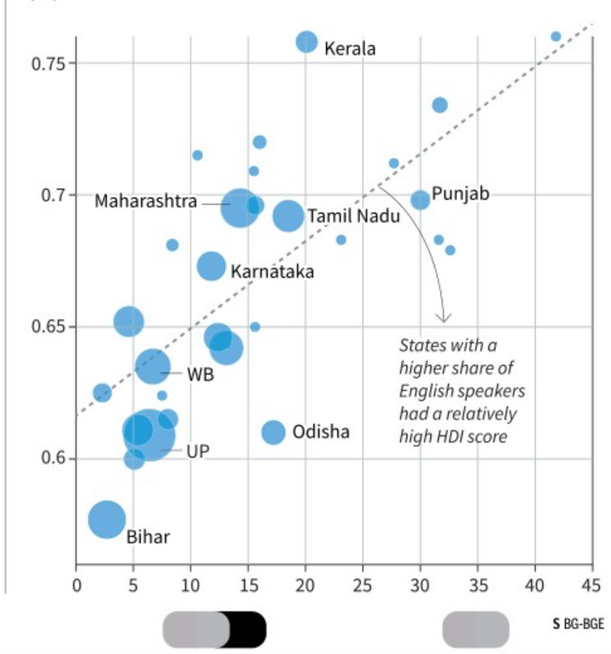


CHART 6: The chart plots the share of English speakers in 2011 against the HDI scores in 2022. The bigger the dot, the higher the population in the State



DKS's comment against film industry invites Oppn. backlash

While expressing his anger over film artists staying away from the Congress-sponsored Mekedatu protest and also over the not-so-encouraging attendance at BIFFes, the Deputy Chief Minister said, 'We know how to tighten the nuts and bolts'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A day after Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar expressed his anger over film artists/fraternity staying away from the Congress-sponsored Mekedatu protest as well as its thin attendance at the launch of the Bengaluru International Film Festival (BIFFEes)-2025 and issued a veiled threat to the industry, his comments attracted condemnation from the BJP and the Janata Dal (Secular).

Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok said that the Deputy Chief Minister had used a public platform to threaten cinema artists. "It is left to the artists to decide whether to participate or not in the political padayatra organised by the Congress. It does not bring honour to your position to tell the artists that they would get benefits if they go with the Congress," Mr. Ashok said on social media platform X. "Artists are no one's property nor are they Congress party workers. Come out of the mindset of treating everyone as your slaves and expecting everyone to salute your party. Learn to respect artists."

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar at the inaugural function of the 16th Bengaluru International Film Festival on Saturday. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

In the presence of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at the inauguration of BIFFes on Saturday, Mr. Shivakumar said: "We know how to tighten the nuts and bolts".

Jagadish Shettar, former Chief Minister and Belagavi MP, felt that it was a personal decision of the artists to come or not, and that it was not good to threaten them. "There is no need to scold them. In the past, the late thespian Dr. Rajkumar took the lead in the Gokak movement to urge the implementation of Gokak report."

Attacking Mr. Shivakumar, Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy told reporters in Koppal that the Congress has been given 138 seats.

"The question on who gives them support or not does not arise. Power is in their hands. Were they given power to tighten nuts and bolts of people on the streets? Experts are there to fix it. He should do what is expected of him," Mr. Kumaraswamy, who was a film producer and distributor earlier, said.

Actor-turned-politician Nikhil Kumaraswamy told reporters in Bengaluru: "I assume that all in the film industry are aware of developments in society. It is their personal choice to join a public movement or not. Some artists may have not wanted to identify themselves with a political party. He should learn to respect all and leave aside the business of tightening nuts and bolts."

However, Mr. Shivakumar was unfazed by the criticism. "Mr. Ashok or artists can speak whatever they want. I have spoken the truth. Let them protest. Those who had said that they would support Karnataka's land, water, and language issues, did not come. In fact, the BJP government lodged cases against Sadhu Kokila, 'Duniya' Vijay, and Prem, who took part in the Mekedatu padayatra," he told reporters in Udupi.

Meanwhile, Mr. Kokila, who received praise from the Deputy Chief Minister, told a TV channel that it was not true that the artists did not participate in the padayatra. "it is left to them whether to come or not. The Deputy Chief Minister has said what he has felt."

Shivakumar will become CM before December: MLA

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a fresh salvo fired by those supporting Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar in his quest to become the Chief Minister, Channagiri Congress legislator Shivaganga Basavaraj on Sunday said that it was their right to ask for the post considering the hard work and resources spent on the Congress's success in Karnataka and declared that Mr. Shivakumar will become the Chief Minister before December.

Mr. Basavaraj said: "If we do not support him, it is a waste that we are in the Congress. He has contributed in getting 70 to 80 legislators elected for the first time. His presence is needed and I am sure that the party would make him the Chief Minister."

He told reporters: "Before December, he will become Chief Minister. Including this two-and-a-half year term and the next term of five years, he will be Chief Minister for the next seven-and-a-half years. I will give it in writing in blood," he told reporters.

Mr. Basavaraj's statement comes amid rumours of Mr. Shivakumar jumping the ship to the BJP, and has been the strongest statement emerging from Mr. Shivakumar's camp in the recent months as jostling for the leadership has plagued the Congress.

Despite intervention by the high command, the verbal volleys have been continuing even as the speculated power-sharing formula is cited by the Deputy Chief Minister's side.

Further, Mr. Basavaraj said: "We have all worked hard and I have been telling from the beginning that we brought the party from zero to nine seats in Lok Sabha and 86 to 140 seats in the Assembly. He has organised (the party) and he has spent money. He has sacrificed for the party."

When asked if Mr. Shivakumar would become the Chief Minister with the help of Congress or BJP legislators, he said: "He will become the Chief Minister with the help of Congress legislators. Since there are 140 legislators, there is no need for others' support."

When asked what would be the next move if the Congress does not make him the Chief Minister, he said: "That question does not arise. We believe in remaining positive."

Taking on Cooperation Minister K.N. Rajanna for his statements against Mr. Shivakumar, Mr. Basavaraj said that the high command should shut him. "Is it wrong to speak about Hindus? What is wrong in observing Shivaratri? Seniors like Mr. Rajanna speak only to further their political interests."

He said: "Mr. Rajanna is embarrassing the government and the party. I urge the high command to act against him."

'Congress will fight delimitation move through EC and courts'

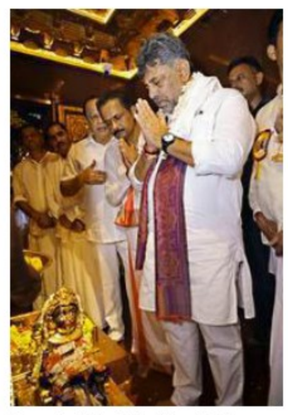
The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar alleged on Sunday that the Union government's move towards delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies is aimed at reducing the seats of southern States. "The Congress will fight against it," he said.

Speaking to pressperson at Mangaluru International Airport on his way to Udupi, Mr. Shivakumar said the Congress opposes delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies. "It is not correct. Congress will fight against it through Election Commission and the courts," he said.

Later, he spoke at the Brahmakalashotsava celebrations of new Marigudi temple at Kaup, near Udupi. The Deputy Chief Minister said that the temple had been renovated without any grant from the government.

He said that all should bow their heads before humanity and all should protect their respective religions. Mr. Shivakumar said that no religion has preached to "disturb" people of other religions. All should live cordially.


Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar at the Brahmakalashotsava celebrations of Marigudi temple at Kaup in Udupi district on Sunday. UMESH S. SHETTIGAR

CORRIDORS OF POWER

Union Minister's favourite oil

Participating in the National Horticulture Fair organised by the Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR), Union Minister of State for Labour, Employment and MSME Shobha Karandlaje *(pictured)* got talking about how India has become self-sufficient in food production and has excess to export.

While India has the potential to become the food basket of the world by 2047, she said the country has not achieved self-sufficiency in oil production and is still dependent on other countries.

Ms. Karandlaje then got talking about oils and claimed that many edible oils which come to the market in packets have palmolein oil mixed in then. But then, the Minister said she is not affected by this adulteration. "While adulterated oils have adverse effects on one's health, I wouldn't know anything about it as I am someone who eats coconut oil!" she chuckled. Hailing from coastal Karnataka, it is no surprise that the Minister is a coconut oil loyalist. However, the comment did not seem to get much traction with the crowd in Bengaluru.

George remembers steel bridge

Energy Minister K.J. George recently expressed his full support to Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar's ambitious but contentious Tunnel Road project.

At a press conference, when reporters asked him about his opposition to the Tunnel Road project, Mr. George said: "The Opposition has just got used to opposing every project. I have travelled to many places around the world and many cities have tunnels which have proved beneficial for traffic movement. This project has been long overdue as it was supposed to be done back when I was the Bengaluru Development Minister. But the budget for it was too high at the time."

Then he decided to throw in a comment on his earlier pet project that faced severe opposition and never saw the light of day during his previous tenure. "Back then, so many people opposed the steel bridge project. But now all of us get stuck in Hebbal during daily commutes!," he said smugly.

Yatnal and TRP ratings

Basanagouda R. Patil Yatnal *(pictured)*, leader of the BJP group that has rebelled against party State president B.Y. Vijayendra and his father, seem to think that the media, especially TV channels, are conspiring against him.

At a recent interaction with television reporters in Davangere, Mr. Yatnal accused the media of being biased in favour of Mr. Vijayendra. "You are all against us. That is clear from your reports. About our recent visit to New Delhi, you wrote that the trip of the rebels to the capital was a failure as the party high command leaders refused to meet them. Some of you also wrote that we returned from Delhi even before opening our luggage. You all knew that it was all false, but still kept up the lie. Maybe Mr. Vijayendra is giving you something," he said.

When some journalists confronted him and said that, on the contrary, it was Mr. Yatnal who got the most screentime on TV and not Mr. Vijayendra, he retorted that it was all because his face fetched them good television rating points (TRP) and not for any love of him.

Jahnavi T.R.
Rishikesh Bahadur Desai

CITU to launch protest against 'anti-labour policies' of State govt.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) will launch a five-day protest in Bengaluru on Monday, seeking solutions to long-pending labour issues in Karnataka.

The CITU said that the State government's decisions after the Lok Sabha elections have been disappointing and have failed the labour force that expected favourable economic policies.

The CITU said that the policies of the State and the Centre have been pro corporate, and the State government has been resorting to loans that is dangerous to the economy.

"The State government has hiked the metro and the bus fares, and is trying to monetise public sector assets. Farmers' land is being forcibly acquired to meet the needs of corporates and land mafia. The anti-labour and anti-farmers' policies brought by the BJP is being continued by the Congress government. The demands of organised and unorganised work force, gig workers, and contractual labour have not been met," it said.

On Monday, gram panchayat workers will participate in the protest, followed by workers of Akshara Dasoha on Tuesday, and construction workers on Wednesday. While industrial workers will protest on March 6, anganwadi workers will do so on March 7.

The 37 demands for labour welfare include implementation of minimum wages across trades that has been stayed since 2022; withdrawing amendments brought by the BJP increasing work time and allowing women to work in night shift; holding State labour conference; converting temporary and contractual workers into permanent workers; including those working for government programmes/ schemes, withdrawing labour concessions given to IT sector; setting right lacunas in administration of construction workers welfare fund, among others.

Govt of Karnataka
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD DIVISION KALABURAGI
No: EE/PWD/KD/TS-2/Tender Notification/2024-25/7290 Date: 01.03.2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

1) Name of Work: Executive Engineer PWD Division Invites tender for the (22) Works under KKRDB. for indent No Gen (16) 19672, 19778, 19991, 19993, 19762, 15968, 20030, 19736, 19761, 18773, 19894, 19896, 19988, 19922, 19961, 20033.((3) SC Categorry 19970, 19978, 19763.) ((2)Cat-II(A) 19977, 19637) ((1)Cat-I 19090), 2) Estimate cost: **Min Rs. 11.00 Lakhs Max Rs. 350.00 Lakhs**, 3) Eligibility of Contractor: Class IV, III, II, I. & above, 4) EMD Amount: Rs. 24000.00 Rs. 444000.00, 5) Pre-Bid Meeting: **13.03.2025 (11.00 Hrs)**, 6) Last date for quries: **14.03.2025 (17.30 Hrs),** 7) Last date for Submission of Bid: **15.03.2025 (16.00 Hrs),** 9) Date of Opening of Technical Bid : **17.03.2025 (16.30 Hrs)**,10) Date of opening of Financial Bid (for Two Cover) : **18.03.2025 (11.30 Hrs)**, 11) Enquiries: Office of the Executive Engineer PWD Division Kalaburagi, 12) **Note:** GST Will be Paid Separately, 13) Website: WWW.e-proc.Karnatak.gov.in, 14) Bidders Should Note That: **Note:** 1) Undersigned reserves the right to Cancel/ Postpone/Recall/Reject any or all the tenders at any point of time during tender process without assigning any reason. 2) Changes in the tender process, Cancel/ Postpone/Recall/Rejection of tender will not be Published in the News Papers Bidders may get Details of Changes In KPPP Portal Only.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
PWD Division Kalaburagi
DIPR/Kalaburagi/1023/KSMC&A/2024-25

Government of Karnataka
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PANCHAYAT RAJ ENGINEERING DIVISION KALABURAGI
No: EE/PRED/KLB/KKRDB /TS-5/TND/2024-25/4705 Date : 01/03/2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through E-procurement Two Cover System)

1) Name of work: 1. Improvements to 4 (Four) Rural Roads in Afzalpur Constituency Indent No. (1) 13199 (2) 13198 (3) 13200 (4) 13201, 2. Improvements to 1 (One) Rural Roads in Kalaburagi South Constituency Indent No. (1) 9496/2nd Call, 3. Improvements to 1 (One) Rural Roads in Kalaburagi Rural Constituency Indent No. (1) 7666/2nd Call, 4. Improvements to 1 (One) Rural Roads in Jewargi Constituency Indent No. (1) 1368/2nd Call, 2) Head of account: **5054 Roads for the year 2022-23 & 2023-24,** 3) Amount put to tender: Minimum **Rs. 50,84,169.03,** Maximum **Rs. 1,61,21,367.21,** 4) Class of Contractor: Class - III & Above, 5) Issue of Blank Tender Documents: **01-03-2025 to 13-03-2025 upto 4.00 pm**, 6) Tender Form Fee: As per KPPP Norms, 7) E.M.D. Fee: Minimum Rs.1,02,000.00, Maximum Rs. 2,42,000.00, 8) Receipt of completed tender documents: **01-03-2025 to 13-03-2025 upto 4.00 pm**, 9) Technical Bid Opening Date: **14-03-2025 After 4.00 pm**, 10) Financial Bid opening Date: **17-03-2025 After 11.00 am**, 11) For more details contact: Office of the Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division Opp: Karnataka Grameen Bank (PKGB) Head office, Kusnoor Road, Rajapur Kalaburagi, 12) Website Address: www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division Kalaburagi
DIPR/Kalaburagi/1026/KSMC&A/2024-25

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER
(Only through KPP-Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from registered Agencies for the following works:

Office of the Chief Engineer (East), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru - 560009

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender EMD (in Rs.)		Last Date & Time for Submission of Tender	Date & Time for Opening of Tender
1	East-1	BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/5393/ 2024-25 Date: 01.03.2025 (4th Call)	1	Rs.76,20,587/- Rs.1,52,500/-	10.03.2025 upto 4:00 PM	11.03.2025 after 5:00 PM
2			2	Rs.86,46,299/- Rs.1,73,000/-		
3		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/5393/ 2024-25 Date: 01.03.2025 (5th Call)	3	Rs.77,14,568/- Rs.1,54,300/-		
4		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/5393/ 2024-25 Date: 01.03.2025 (6th Call)	4	Rs.44,62,393/- Rs.89,300/-		
5		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/5391/ 2024-25 Date: 01.03.2025 (3rd Call)	1	Rs.41,78,728/- Rs.83,600/-		
6		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/5391/ 2024-25 Date: 01.03.2025 (4th Call)	2	Rs.66,58,681/- Rs.1,33,200/-		
7			3	Rs.33,47,082/- Rs.67,000/-		
8			4	Rs.54,66,167/- Rs.1,09,400/-		
9		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/5391/ 2024-25 Date: 01.03.2025 (5th Call)	5	Rs.50,87,675/- Rs.1,01,800/-		
10		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/5389/ 2024-25 Date: 01.03.2025 (4th Call)	1	Rs.37,96,640/- Rs.76,000/-		
11		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/5389/ 2024-25 Date: 01.03.2025 (5th Call)	2	Rs.57,44,679/- Rs.1,15,000/-		
12		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/5389/ 2024-25 Date: 01.03.2025 (6th Call)	3	Rs.81,71,287/- Rs.1,63,430/-		
13			4	Rs.64,46,206/- Rs.1,28,930/-		
14			5	Rs.68,64,424/- Rs.1,37,300/-		
15			6	Rs.43,84,731/- Rs.87,700/-		
16			7	Rs.40,87,811/- Rs.81,800/-		
17		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/5387/ 2024-25 Date: 01.03.2025		Rs.34,06,470/- Rs.68,200/-		

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (East-1)**

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurment process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.
DIPR/CP/BCPL/5398/2024-25

CACHE

GETTY IMAGES

Why have Cognizant and Infosys filed lawsuits against each other?

The case is a marker for the bitter rivalry between Indian IT majors often offering similar services and underlines the need for a rulebook for senior level executives transitioning between them. Previously, legal action was avoided out of respect, but now there is a need for clear guidelines

Poulomi Chatterjee

The story so far:

In August 2024, TriZetto, a Cognizant subsidiary and healthcare solutions provider, took Infosys to court, alleging that the IT major had stolen data from their proprietary software. Four months later, in January, Infosys denied allegations and filed a countersuit against Cognizant CEO Ravi Kumar S, former Infosys executive, for deliberately delaying the launch of its health platform, Helix. Infosys alleged that the U.S.-headquartered IT firm resorted to anticompetitive activities like poaching key personnel and imposing restrictive contractual barriers that stopped its clients from going to competitors and even declining training them on Infosys software. The Bengaluru-based IT giant claimed triple the damages it suffered, along with legal costs. The case spotlights a bitter rivalry between two major IT services providers that offer similar services, and underlines the need for a rulebook for senior-level executive transitions.

What is Cognizant's case against Infosys?

The lawsuit initially filed by Cognizant in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Dallas, Texas, states that Infosys breached multiple Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) to illegally access their software applications – Facets and QNXT. The misappropriated data from these solutions was then allegedly leveraged by Infosys to build their own flagship healthcare software, Infosys Helix. Both these software solutions work on automating cumbersome administrative tasks for health insurance companies, like processing claims, billing, and enrolling members. The complaint noted that Infosys had copied TriZetto's software, repackaging it while also developing software to extract confidential data from QNXT.

"When confronted, Infosys obfuscated to the maximum extent possible, asking TriZetto to simply trust, based on nothing, that there had been no wrongdoing. When TriZetto refused to take Infosys on its word and demanded an audit of Infosys' use of TriZetto's information, as explicitly permitted under the NDAs for any reason (much less rampant trade secret appropriation), Infosys refused to comply," Cognizant said. Executives frequently switching between IT majors are not uncommon, but tensions were building between Infosys and Cognizant for some time regarding this issue. For instance, there was the case of Rajesh Varrier, a former Infosys executive who served as EVP, Head of Global Services, and Infosys Americas. On September 2, 2024, Rajesh Varrier was appointed as the Global Head of Operations at Cognizant. Mr. Kumar, who held the positions of President and Deputy COO at Infosys, departed in October 2022 and assumed the top role at Cognizant, effective January 2023. This recent move has escalated the situation.

What has Infosys said?

Infosys' countersuit revealed its anger. It explained that Mr. Kumar had initially praised Infosys Helix during his time at Infosys, calling it a "challenger to traditional platforms." However, his enthusiasm for the product waned randomly early in 2022. Consequently, any support he had provided for the platform gradually diminished as he stopped requesting the necessary resources. This ultimately delayed the project's completion by 18 months. Notably, the filing doesn't merely mention Mr. Kumar – there's also Shveta Arora, former SVP and Global Head of Domain Consulting Services at Infosys, who transitioned to Cognizant at the end of 2023, assuming the roles of SVP and Global Head of Consulting. Additionally, Ravi Kuchibhotla, a seasoned veteran from Infosys, now leads strategy at Cognizant.

"Kumar continued to ignore requests for additional engineering support for Infosys Helix in the spring of 2022, along with the assistance of Arora and Kuchibhotla, cancelling meetings to discuss the issue, even though the lack of staffing had resulted in a situation where the client is shaming us on the delays and concerns within Infosys that the client might cancel the contract due to these delays," the claim stated.

Cognizant's unscrupulous actions, as alleged in the lawsuit, have "artificially raised entry barriers," adversely impacting competition in the U.S. healthcare sector. This has resulted in increased costs for the general public, leading to higher health insurance premiums.

What's the history of non-compete litigation in the Indian IT sector?

Besides the complications surrounding the charges of data theft and unethical conduct, there's a recent precedent for non-compete cases involving Cognizant.

Last year, Jatin Dalal, the former Chief Financial Officer of Nasdaq-listed IT firm Wipro, was sued by his former employer. Dalal, who had spent 21 years at Wipro, resigned in September 2023 and joined Cognizant as their new CFO in a surprising announcement in December. The case was eventually settled, with Cognizant paying $505,087 (approximately ₹4 crore) to resolve the dispute. Cognizant also confirmed that a similar settlement had been reached regarding a lawsuit between Wipro and former SVP Mohammad Haque.

Mr. Kumar has addressed questions related to Infosys' countersuit. While acknowledging that leadership changes are a natural part of attrition and restructuring, Mr. Kumar dismissed the gossip about instability at Cognizant.

Although similar cases in the U.S. tend to drag on, companies operating in the U.S. prefer to wage these battles there, considering the substantial damages parties are often awarded. "It pops up repeatedly in these lawsuits simply because its U.S.-based and a resolution is faster to achieve there as courts move faster," Pareekh Jain, CEO and lead analyst at EIIRTrend explained.

Do transitions need a better process?

Over the last few years, there has been a noticeable increase in executives moving between major Indian IT companies, with competitors actively recruiting even non-executive employees. Previously, legal action was avoided out of respect, but now there is a need for clear guidelines on what is permissible. Establishing a cooling period, which was once common, is essential. Typically, CXOs had anti-compete clauses in their contracts lasting six-12 months, but these are often disregarded.

Some individuals even join other firms without formal agreements. This case could potentially establish a precedent for similar situations, Mr. Jain noted.

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

He was crestfallen when he failed

Going through two rounds of interview, a mandatory assignment and a test is no picnic

S. Upendran

"Hi! Nice to see you again. When did you get back from Singapore?"

"A couple of days ago."

"So, how was the trip? Did the students enjoy it?"

"We all had a good time. Managed to see a few places and do some shopping. But I'm happy to be back."

"I'm sure, you are! Looking after 15 students couldn't have been a picnic."

"Picnic? What are you talking about? We didn't go on any picnic."

"I didn't say you and your students went on a picnic. I said looking after them couldn't have been a picnic. Meaning, taking care of them must have been hard work."

"You're right, it certainly wasn't a picnic. It required a great deal of effort. Kids today can be so demanding, and so very unpleasant at times."

"That's true! My great grandmother had a dozen kids. Bringing them up couldn't have been a picnic."

"I'm sure it wasn't. I thought of quitting my job and starting my own school. Talked to a few people about it, and they said that running a school was no picnic."

"I was in Bengaluru last week. Driving in that city is no picnic."

"I think most people would agree with you on that! The good thing about the place is that you won't get a challan for overspeeding."

"That's true! By the way, the word 'overspeeding' is an Indianism. Native speakers of English do not use the word. They merely say 'speeding' and not 'overspeeding'. In the U.S. and the U.K., when you're caught exceeding the speed limit, you're given a ticket for 'speeding' – and not 'overspeeding'."

"I see. The policeman gave Vinita a challan for speeding. How does that sound?"

"Good example. Speeding is a common problem on all our highways."

"It most certainly is. By the way, did your cousin's daughter get through the entrance test?"

"Surprisingly, she did not! Needless to say, she's crestfallen."

"Crestfallen? Does it mean disappointed?"

"Yes, that's one of the meanings of the word. 'Crestfallen' also suggests that you're disappointed or shocked with the outcome because it's totally unexpected."

"In other words, your cousin's daughter was expecting to get through the entrance test."

"That's right! She's never failed a test."

"How about this example? When the children were told that the birthday party had been cancelled, they were crestfallen."

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THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Test yourself on various Indian languages

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
How many languages are recognised as per the Constitution of India under the Eighth Schedule and which language has a country's name in it?

QUESTION 2
What is common to Bodo, Dogri, Kashmiri, Maithili, Santali and Sindhi that are part of the recognised languages?

QUESTION 3
Apart from the four south Indian languages, which other two languages have the 'Classical' status?

QUESTION 4
Which language has the second-highest number of native speakers after Hindi?

QUESTION 5
In which language was Tulsidas' *Ramcharitmanas* set to have been written?

QUESTION 6
Thanks to consonant-vowel combination forming a unique character, which Indian language has a whopping 247 characters in the traditional classification?

QUESTION 7
Why has Meghalaya's Kongthong village fascinated linguists?

Visual question:
Name this Englishman who deciphered the Brahmi script, considered the ancestor of most modern Indian scripts, in 1837 by studying Ashokan inscriptions?

Questions and Answers to the February 28 edition of the daily quiz: 1. This American scientist drafted the famous "Hiroshima Appeal". **Ans: Linus Pauling. He won the Nobel prizes for both Chemistry and Peace**
2. The theme of National Science Day this year. **Ans: Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science and Innovation for Viksit Bharat**
3. This American TV show follows doctors and staff coping with war through humour and camaraderie. **Ans: M*A*S*H**
4. In 2013, Benedict XVI resigned as Pope, becoming the first to resign since this Pope in 1415. **Ans: Gregory XII**
5. This Prime Minister was assassinated in Stockholm in 1986. **Ans: Olof Palme**
Visual: Michael Jackson won these many Grammys at the 26th Grammy Awards for this album. **Ans: Eight awards; Thriller**
Early Birds: Tamal Biswas| Erfanally Oosmany| Sonali Das| Dodo Jayaditya| Sumana Dutta

Word of the day

Ensconce:
fix firmly

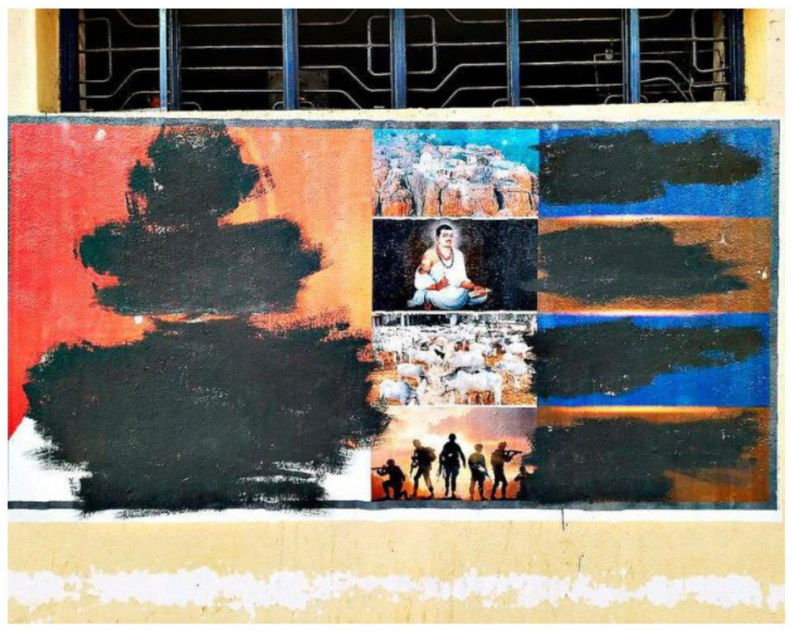
Synonym: settle

Usage: *He ensconced himself in front of the computer.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/ensconcepron

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ɛn'skɒns/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'



Flex banners, which usually vanish in a few days, are something in flux. Unless you document it day in and day out, it is not going to be there, says Kashi. RAVIKUMAR KASHI

Photographing the city: What Bengaluru's flex banners say about who we are

Bengaluru-based artist Ravikumar Kashi began photographing the ubiquitous flex banners of the city in 2007, as a way of understanding the city and its changing ethos

Preeti Zachariah
BENGALURU

Ravikumar Kashi says that his interest in flex banners began around 2007 when he began photographing them for a series of his artworks and to use as material for an art appreciation course he teaches at the RV College of Architecture, Bengaluru.

"For the course, I introduce them to the fundamentals of art language," he explains, pointing out that things like size, scale, proportion, shape, position, association, framing, and proximity play a significant role in our perception of any image, whether a flex board or an art object. "I was using these images as part of a classroom exercise to show how the visual language we were discussing in class could also be seen on the street," says Kashi, who recently delivered a talk titled *Bangalore/ Bengaluru Changes* at the Alliance Literary Festival, Bengaluru.

Kashi started this photography journey using a digital camera that he would lug around with him. "If I see something, I take a picture and document it," he says. "It was all in one big folder. Nowadays, I have started putting it in different sub-folders, but it is still not properly segregated. " He admits that back when he started, "it wasn't very planned. I had no clear idea why I was doing it, but I knew in my gut that these are important because I have studied the history of visual culture a little."

A few years down the line, however, the project's raison d'être became much more evident. "All I am doing now is collecting, but as I do so, more and more, I realise the value of it," says Kashi, who has shot between 7000-8000 images so far and intends to keep doing so. He thinks of this exercise as living documentation of sorts. "Flex banners, which usually vanish in a few days, are something in flux. Unless you document it day in and day out, it is not going to be there," says Kashi, who went on to publish *Flexing Muscles* (2019), a bilingual series of essays linking these banners to the city's constantly evolving socio-cultural and political landscapes.

Asserting identities

Flex banners, and by that same logic, posters, cutouts, statues, and vehicle images, have become a way to assert various identities, believes Kashi. "People are continuously communicating who they are and what they want, and then, because they can't find a voice in other ways, they use this medium of public visual culture to say something."

In the first essay of *Flexing Muscles*, Kashi talks about how senes, "armies to safeguard Kannada land, language and culture" using flex banners to communicate their power and position. "It becomes a tool through which they announce and represent themselves," he says, tracing the evolution of linguistic identity politics in the city. There is a stark difference between what Bengaluru is today, "with its high-rise buildings, congested roads and saturated visual stimuli," and what it used to be: a laid-back pensioners paradise with excellent weather. But soon, the IT revolution started in the city, with Texas Instruments being the first to set up shop back in the mid-1980s.

Ravikumar Kashi

While the changing weather and the traffic were the most apparent manifestations of the city's transformation, writes Kashi, the cultural demographic and languages used in the city also underwent a tremendous change. "The non-Kannada speaking population living in Bangalore increased sharply, leaving Kannadigas feeling marginalised in their own land," he writes, adding that this, in turn, led to the rise of pro-Kannada groups that were trying to find ways to remedy the situation.

At the recent talk, Kashi shared samples of some of these images, shot over the last 15 years, and expanded on their meanings. "These things give you all kinds of subtle messages. They are nice things to observe and document because you can read so much into it."

For instance, one of the most ubiquitous sights in Bengaluru's visual landscape continues to be the visage of Kannada actor Dr. Rajkumar, who "became the face of the Gokak movement, which was an agitation to install Kannada as an official language. Because of that, he became associated with Kannada culture and language in a big way," he says. "He never did any other language movie at all. So that became an extension of his personality."

In a similar vein, a photo of a red-and-yellow Kannada flag propped on a large wall with a similarly coloured background on which are painted Kannada film heroes "is an assertion of Kannada identity in a public space" as are the many images of the Chalukyan emperor, Pulikeshi and freedom-fighter Sangolli Rayanna that have cropped up in the city in the last few years. Many of these visuals are also being used to communicate dominance.

"In my area now, the Congress MLA has won the seat. So the BJP MLA cannot put up his banner anywhere, everywhere. He is confined to his area," explains Kashi. "So, it is a way of marking the territory," he says.

Placement matters

Placement is another way of communicating importance. Mahatma Gandhi's image, for example, will invariably have him in the centre, surrounded by other freedom fighters. "You will never put Gandhi on the edge and someone else in the centre. Who stands in the centre shows the power influences in that group." Kashi also discusses the significance of the use of specific colours, the locations in which these banners are placed, and how gender plays out in these banners and posters. "Most of the time, women are placed at the bottom," he says. But, if parties are trying to get more women voters, the placement may change. "The lady candidate could be in the centre, with men protecting her," he says. "This reflects how much representation we have in the political arena for women candidates."

Personalising vehicles

Kashi also highlights the phenomenon of people trying to personalise their vehicles with images such as those of tigers, lions or Rudra Hanuman, "further asserting masculinity" and the city's statue culture.

"Last year, with two of my colleagues, Salila Vanka and Madhuri Rao, both architects, we documented more than 800 statues in the city," he says, recounting some of the data garnered from this exercise. "Out of the huge number, there were only 11 statues of women... around 100 or so were Ambedkar statues... about 200 statues of Rajkumar," says Kashi, who thinks of this work not as political but as "bearing witness to my time."

"This is a project of passion. Panels and posters are very ephemeral. By documenting them, you are building an archive," says Kashi.

'India's future in space tech will be powered by software'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

India's future in space, technology, and sustainable development will be powered by a strong foundation in software excellence, developed at scale and refined through continuous learning and collaboration, said Dr. S. Somanath, former Director of ISRO.

He was delivering keynote address at the summit on the theme 'Software Product Management Excellence at Scale' organised at the Indian Institute of Management-Bangalore's (IIM-B) Centre for Software and IT Management, along with the International Software Product Management Association (ISPMA).

Somnath emphasised the evolution of software product management and development for space programmes. "Over the years, we have developed complex software systems for geospatial data portals, disaster management platforms, and climate monitoring tools – all serving governments, researchers, and the public," he said.

It's not yet control-alt-delete for civilisation

Last week, the International Asteroid Warning Network told us there's a 3.1 percent chance that it might strike the earth

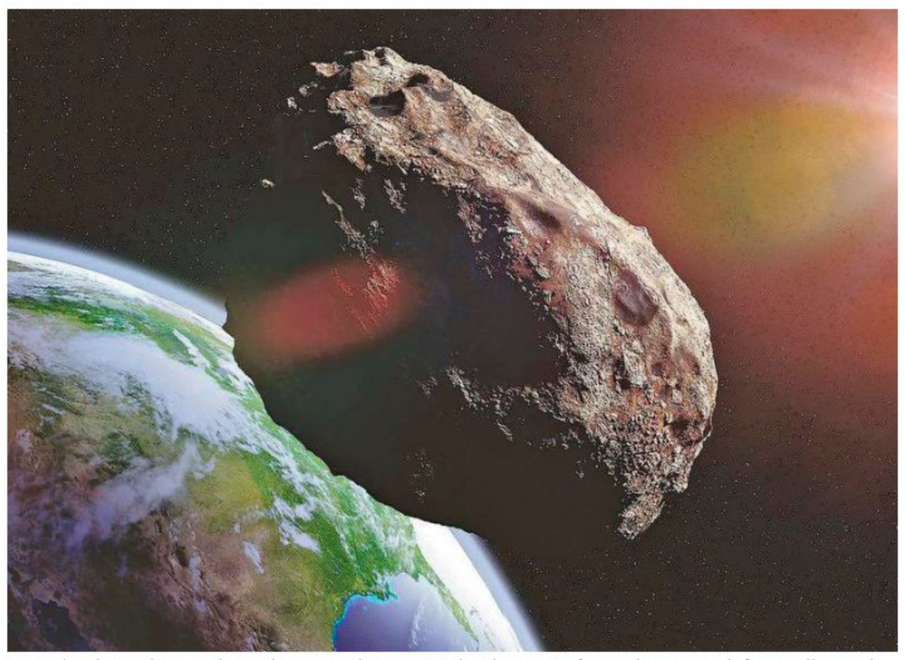
ABOUT 500 WORDS

Suresh Menon

It might sound like one of Elon Musk's children (three of whom are named X, Techno Mechanicus and Exa Dark Sidereal), but 2024 YR4 might be more destructive. For it is an asteroid travelling towards the earth at some speed.

Last week, the International Asteroid Warning Network told us there's a 3.1 percent chance that it might strike the earth. So if you have made plans for 22 December 2032, there might be an issue. For that is when the asteroid is expected to arrive. It is the shortest day of the year - a phrase that suddenly becomes loaded with greater meaning. As Bill Nye said, "If the earth gets hit by an asteroid, it's game over. It's control-alt-delete for civilisation."

It is too early to panic, however. Or even worry. Not even fret. YR4 (as it isn't called affectionately) is under 90 metres long, and it was initially assumed it wouldn't cause much damage. The one that rushed dinosaurs into extinction all those million years ago was 10 km long. But who knows if YR4 won't merge with other friendly asteroids en route? Belief that the end of the world is near is not uncommon among many religious groups. It even has a name - apocalypticism.



Our schools teach us nothing about avoiding asteroids. That part of our education is left to Hollywood. It is the movies that have ready solutions. GETTY IMAGES

Our schools teach us nothing about avoiding asteroids. That part of our education is left to Hollywood. It is the movies that have ready solutions. Get into a rocket and fly off till the earth is habitable again, one suggested. Another explained how an asteroid can be thrown off its path through some kind of nucleary blasty thingy so it goes away into the sun where it is swallowed. The sun is so large it won't even burp after that meal.

Deflecting the asteroid seems a good idea, especially since no one can sue us. Which is probably why NASA has done it in the past.

But - and here's good news - days after the 3.1 percent forecast, the odds of the asteroid hitting the earth began to drop, and this week NASA blew the all clear. Probability had fallen to 0.004 percent.

Possible impact areas included the Arabian Sea and South Asia

That's one chance in 25,000, later corrected to one in 59,000.

Odds keep fluctuating as figures get more accurate as does data interpretation. Somewhere down the line we were told the asteroid might unleash a destructive force similar to a nuclear bomb. Possible impact areas included the Arabian Sea and South Asia, so you had a right to feel unsettled even if worry might have been premature. By May this year, YR4 will be hidden from our view, to reappear only in 2028.

All this is good to know. An asteroid threat might be a good way of gaining a perspective on our petty battles and unnecessary squabbles and shameful behaviour at a press conference.

Still, here's a request to scientists: Next time, don't tell us. If we can't do anything about it, let us at least enjoy life till the Final Boom (a fitting end to something that began with the Big Bang).

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 3, 1975

Nutrition Schemes not Helping the Needy

Bangalore, March 2: The Minister for Social Welfare, Mr. N. Rachaiah has expressed his dissatisfaction at the way food products received from agencies like the CARE were being distributed. Inaugurating a State-level seminar on applied nutrition programme organised by the Department of Co-operation and Rural Development here today, he said that needy people and school-going children were not getting the benefit of special nutrition schemes. He suggested that the food received from the CARE and similar organisations could be pooled and distributed by one responsible agency.

Mr. Rachaiah said that to tackle the problem of malnutrition, the mid-day meal scheme was started under the CARE programme and the applied nutrition programme with the UNICEF.

Karnataka Cotton Growers in a Quandary

Hubli, March 1: Cotton growers in Karnataka State which accounts for nearly one-third of the total production in the country are in a quandary over the studied silence maintained by the Cotton Corporation of India in entering the market for the purchase of cotton.

The marketing season in Karnataka, where the cotton cultivation is mostly concentrated in the northern region, is most active during the first four months of the calendar year. The long staple variety which makes the initial appearance gradually gives way to the short staple variety almost during the middle of the season.

CITYBEATS

Women shine through

MARCH 7
As part of International Women's Day celebrations, 12 women artists come together to organise an art show, Avyanna. Presented by Oorja, an art collective of well-known artists, the show will go on till March 10. It will showcase the works of the women artists, with each bringing a unique perspective and skill to the forefront featuring over 60 artworks that will be on display and sale. The show is organised to support the cause of Karunashraya, a joint project of the Indian Cancer Society (Karnataka Chapter) and the Rotary Club of Bangalore (Indira Nagar), under the Bangalore Hospice Trust.
At Bangalore International Centre, 11am to 8pm.

A dash of splash

MARCH 8
Wonderla is introducing a first-of-its-kind celebration across all its amusement parks, offering an exclusive women-only experience. Park entry will be restricted to men and children above the age of 10 on Women's Day. From the buy 1-get-1-free offer, Bengaluru Park will come alive with a special Women's Chingari Mela, featuring themed decorations, emcee-led activities, face painting, and wave pool DJ session. *On at Wonderla outlets in Bengaluru, Kochi, Hyderabad, and Bhubaneswar. Bengaluru Park (online booking can be done on https://bookings.wonderla.com/ or call 80372 30333 / 9945557777.*

Rhythm is a rapper

Bengaluru rapper Brodha V talks about his latest single 'Hengaithe Maige'

Ruth Dhanaraj

"I realised I could rap and that I have a sense of rhythm. Fans of rapper Brodha V are thrilled with his latest release, 'Hengaithe Maige,' a Kannada single. In a typical Brodha V take, the song is not about sizing up someone, in the way the phrase is usually used.

"It is a fun, quirky number. My spin on it is "live and let live" as anyway, one party is always going to be bigger than the other," says the singer-songwriter based out of Bengaluru.

Shot in and around the city, in 'Hengaithe Maige,' Brodha V is accompanied by some popular faces like Danish Sait, rapper Rahul Dit-O and others, who call Bengaluru their home.

Let's rap it up Brodha V with Paal Dabba and (above) the cover of 'Hengaithe Maige'. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Uncharted territory

While rap is an accepted genre today with sub groups that are constantly evolving, when Brodha entered the scene around 17 years ago, "it was a tiny independent scene with a small community of artistes. We were one of the first batches of rappers in India at the time. It was quite a challenge to make people understand what rap music was and what was being spoken about through our work."

"It took a couple of years to build our community and make our work entertaining enough for people to call us back for a live show or to get a gig," he says, adding that cyphers played a large part in bringing together music lovers with similar tastes.

"A cypher is a gathering of rappers who perform for themselves, showcasing their styles, explains Brodha. Today, cyphers include spectators who bring in a certain energy to the proceedings.

"Gradually, we moved onto the internet platforms of the day – YouTube and Facebook. And as we grew, opportunities began to come our way too. All this helped in the growth of an audience."

The artiste who raps in English and multiple Indian languages such as Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Hindi and Sanskrit, produces his own music with Carnatic and Hindustani influences. While he has no formal training in music, Brodha says he was always attracted to it. "I grew up listening to a lot of Michael Jackson and discovered rap in a rather uncharacteristic manner – through AR Rahman's 'Petta Rap' one of the hit songs from the movie *Kadhalan*. I was around five or six years old when I first heard the song."

"Still, I never thought of music as a career till I was in class 11 or 12 and I discovered I had a passion for writing poems and short stories. Eventually, figured I could get lines to rhyme. Much like any teenager, music was my go-to or outlet to express myself and vent."

Brodha says he began slow, by adding beats to popular songs. "I realised I could rap and that I have a sense of rhythm. I went to a studio to record my work and see if I had what it takes to be a good fit for this kind of music."

Signature sound

Looking back at his journey, Brodha talks about his single 'Aathma Raama' which he released in 2012. "I had introduced Sanskrit and devotional elements of the shloka *Aathma Raama* into my piece. The song was about finding my path – I was speaking metaphorically about finding the right path and not going astray in today's world – finding the maturity to do what is right for myself, for my growth and benefit. That it was never too late to change."

> I realised I could rap and that I have a sense of rhythm. I went to a studio to record my work and see if I had what it takes to be a good fit for this kind of music."
> BRODHA V

The response was largely positive, supportive even, with listeners "happy that something like this could be done with rap music," says Brodha.

"Up until then, Western music whether it was rap or rock, was more about how well Indians could imitate that sound. With 'Aathma Raama' came originality and people felt someone was making music they could relate to. It eventually became my sound."

Recent work

In December 2024, Brodha V released 'D.A.T.N' (Dance Away The Night) with artiste Paal Dabba. The song, with lyrics in both Tamil and English, spanned the challenges to duo faced in their careers as musicians.

"The single 'D.A.T.N' was a collaboration between me and Paal Dabba who is fairly new in the field. Our partnership developed organically and I felt I had to write about how with India on the global map, we Indians now have a bigger role to play. 'D.A.T.N' is about how our time is now and we are here to change the power dynamic of any room we walk into."

'Hengaithe Maige,' is out on all streaming platforms

Body percussions January Low and Sooraj Subramaniam relied on movement to convey emotions. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

When dance captures the stillness in movements

Charumathi Supraja

January Low's performance began in stillness.

The absence of music was as striking as the lack of elaborate makeup or ornamentation. Movements being listed in the audio track were being matched with dance poses but the performance established from the beginning a view of the dancer's practice room. The audience was invited to witness the dancer committing sequences to memory, listening to instructions, making notes and finding the dance within.

One of two performances showcased in *The Platform 2025* (presented by Alif Arts Consultancy at Medai, Bengaluru), January Low's 'Pending' displayed the many little dances that make a dance.

It opened repetitions, vulnerability and the search for perfection to the gaze of the audience, accustomed to guzzling the "end product" of demanding preparatory processes. In the final playing out of the dance, with music and other paraphernalia, the audience experienced both journey and destination in January's performance. Sooraj Subramaniam's 'Reflections of an Indian dancer,' the other performance of *The Platform 2025*, was rooted in similar themes but used its own stylistic vocabulary to explore the interiority of a dancer's relationship to three dance genres.

The audience travelled with him as he located Bharatanatyam, Kathak and Odissi in their histories (without sidestepping complexities), on the Indian map and in the landscape of his body (as also his personal history). Unfolding against a sparklingly written and narrated prose-poem, Sooraj's performance placed back-stories in the front.

It reflected on loss; on being "messed with" when home became a distant, unknown entity. It described the "finding of a new locus" that his dance education and practice had enabled.

> "My practice observes how Odissi continues to thrive in my South East Malaysian body as a mother to three children.
> JANUARY LOW

While an earlier version of January's 'Pending' premiered in 2023 as 'A Listening Body,' Sooraj first performed 'Reflections of an Indian Dancer' in 2021, later touring the UK and Europe with it.

'A Listening Body' was a response to the changes in her "relationship with dance after the pandemic," but 'Pending' offered "more nuanced content" because it was based on lessons distilled through the earlier work, January shares. Having been in search of "different entry points for the audience to encounter and experience Odissi," January says, "my practice observes how Odissi continues to thrive in my South East Malaysian body as a mother to three children. My virtual mentorship with *didi* (Bijayini Satpathy) developed an agency in my body and practice that I have never experienced before. This inspired me to create this work."

She was "curious to share the unseen labour (emotional and physical) that goes into practice, and the unwavering faith dancers carry with them when they show up, though performance opportunities are few and far between."

"The biggest challenge as a mother has been to remain consistent, to be kind to myself especially during the pauses (as a mother, there are many) and to stay present," says January.

Her focus, therefore, is on "the sacred stillness" that practice brings to her.

'Reflections of an Indian Dancer', directed by Balbir Singh (of Balbir Singh Dance Company, UK) sought to "make Indian dance accessible without oversimplifying its complexity," says Sooraj.

"The main challenge was maintaining the tone and pace of the prose-poetry script while balancing the genealogies of the dance styles against an autobiographical backdrop." He looks for "synergy rather than conflict between idioms," he says, likening his immersive engagement with three forms to "being multilingual".

Lately, his practice has been centred on Odissi, "especially as I train with Bijayini Satpathy, and am relishing the fresh challenges and possibilities it offers," he says.

Both 'Pending' and 'Reflections of an Indian Dancer' narrated dance stories in a carefully crafted inside out language. Mapping mind and body on stage, they felt inclusive of the audience in ways that conventional dance performances are often not.

Effectively using pause and silence, they made thought visible, evocatively opening up subtext to audience experience.

Rescue teams will reach workers in tunnel in a few days: Revanth

Telangana CM says exact location of those trapped not yet known; presence of debris over five metres deep hampering work; he assures families of the victims that the State will extend all possible help to them, flays BRS for its 'inhuman' stand

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The exact whereabouts of the eight persons trapped in the Srisailam Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel was not known even to the rescue agencies due to the presence of debris over five metres deep and it will take another two or three days to locate them, Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said.

A. Revanth Reddy and Ministers interacting with rescue teams at the SLBC accident site on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Speaking to presspersons at the base office of the work agency at the tunnel mouth near Domalapenta village on Sunday night, after reviewing the rescue work with the agencies involved and visiting the tunnel, the Chief Minister said the possible location of persons trapped was only a primary assessment and it was not possible for the government to make any announcement on their condition without evidence. The ground probing radar (GPR) scan conducted by the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) had only identified possible spots of those who were missing in the tunnel and no persons were found in a couple of spots suggested by it after the debris was removed, he said, adding that only machine parts were found in the suggested locations.

He, however, assured the families of those trapped inside that the government would extend all possible help.

But it was not humane to make any announcement before finding those trapped inside as rescue agencies too had stopped arriving at conclusions about the possibilities of their survival, he said.

Speaking on the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), he said the party was acting inhumanely during a disaster that was aided by their neglect of the project work for 10 years.

He said the BRS government did not complete even 2 km to 3 km of tunnel excavation work during 2014-23. "The water that had accumulated for 10 years in the rock faults had come out gushing when the work was resumed," he said.

'Insult' to Governor: BJP to march to Vidhana Soudha in protest

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

As the year's first legislature session begins on Monday with the address of Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot, the BJP has decided to up the ante by taking out a march from the Legislators' Home to the Vidhana Soudha to register its protest against the alleged insult to the Governor by the Congress government. In recent times, the government has been clashing with the Governor over several issues.

People who visited the book fair at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru had an opportunity to see the Legislative Assembly, on Sunday. PTI

While the Budget session is expected to be stormy, the BJP has particularly taken exception to the Congress government treating every issue with the Raj Bhavan as "political".

The planned march also indicates the BJP's resolve to take the fight against the government to the floor of the two Houses. The BJP and the Janata Dal (Secular) have already held a coordination meeting to strategise their move to put the government on the mat.

"Though the Congress has been attacking the Governor and making everything look political, it now wants him to read out the government's achievements to the joint session of the legislature on Monday. By this, the Congress is showing double standards," Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok said on Sunday.

The march by the BJP leaders will be led by Mr. Ashok and State president B.Y. Vijayendra.

Sources said the Congress government has not only tried to clip the wings of the Governor when it comes to his powers in State-run universities, but has also been insulting him frequently. Owing to such attacks, they said that the Governor did not attend the convocation of some universities anticipating a law and order problem.

BJP, Dalit groups hold talks on preventing diversion of welfare funds

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Ahead of the commencement of the legislature session, the BJP on Sunday held round-table consultations with various Dalit organisations in the State on the methods of preventing diversion of funds meant for Dalits to other schemes.

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, who presided over the consultations, told presspersons that Dalit organisations were anguished over the diversion of funds to other schemes, particularly the government's guarantees.

"The diversion of funds meant for Dalits to guarantees has now made us to think that the guarantees announced by the government had not covered Dalits under their ambit. The government appears to have brought us under the guarantees now by diverting the funds meant for our welfare," Mr. Narayanaswamy alleged.

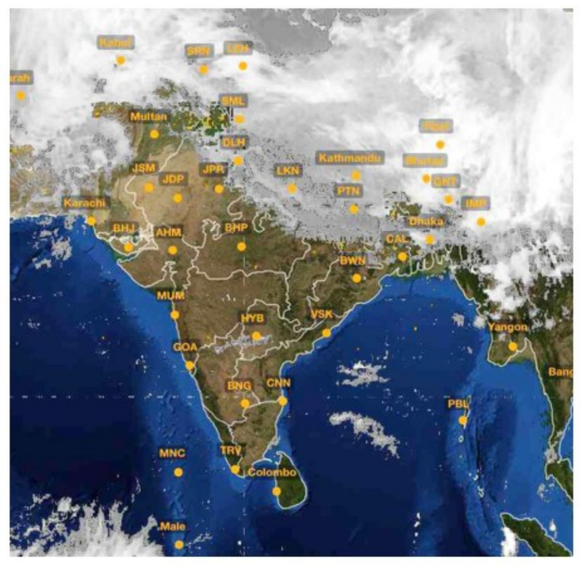
He said that the Dalit organisations that attended the consultations had decided to put up an united fight to prevent any further diversion of funds.

"If need be, we are ready to wage a legal battle too," he remarked.

Mr. Narayanaswamy said that nearly 80 organisations had attended the consultative meeting.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy Rainfall likely at isolated places over Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-BaltistanMuzaffarabad and Himachal Pradesh. Heat wave condition very likely over Coastal Karnataka

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	32.0	22.0	Kozhikode	—	36.3	26.8
Ahmedabad	—	34.6	21.5	Kurnool	—	38.4	23.3
Aizawl	—	31.9	16.1	Lucknow	—	30.8	16.0
Allahabad	—	31.5	16.8	Madurai	—	35.5	24.7
Bengaluru	—	32.9	20.7	Mangaluru	—	35.2	24.4
Bhopal	—	32.4	16.2	Mumbai	—	32.8	24.8
Bhubaneswar	—	36.1	21.0	Mysuru	—	33.0	20.0
Chandigarh	—	25.6	13.0	New Delhi	—	27.0	13.4
Chennai	—	33.3	25.6	Patna	—	30.8	18.0
Coimbatore	—	34.2	24.0	Port Blair	—	31.5	24.7
Dehradun	—	27.2	10.1	Puducherry	—	34.1	24.5
Gangtok	—	20.5	10.1	Pune	—	38.1	22.3
Goa	—	38.2	21.4	Raipur	—	36.2	18.8
Guwahati	—	33.8	15.6	Ranchi	—	31.5	21.0
Hubballi	—	38.0	19.0	Shillong	—	22.7	11.5
Hyderabad	—	35.4	21.2	Shimla	—	18.1	7.3
Imphal	—	25.1	14.6	Srinagar	—	14.5	2.3
Jaipur	—	28.7	18.3	Thiruvananthapuram	2.0	29.8	25.6
Kochi	—	33.6	27.6	Tiruchi	—	35.3	24.6
Kohima	—	20.0	16.9	Vijayawada	—	36.2	23.2
Kolkata	—	32.8	23.1	Visakhapatnam	—	31.5	24.5

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	9	19	1	218	146	
Bengaluru	9	15	30	37	141	
Chennai	5	3	30	25	54	
Delhi	17	51	29	188	153	
Hyderabad	23	12	31	66	126	
Kolkata	5	32	55	99	109	
Lucknow	12	62	48	89	127	
Mumbai	9	80	11	121	139	
Pune	—	14	187	76	—	
Visakhapatnam	9	56	31	59	93	

Yesterday
In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Dholpur, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 211 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 25.

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Going beyond skills

Should higher educational institutions, especially universities, teach and pursue research or engage in skill development?

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

A. Joseph Dorairaj

These days, words like 'skilling,' 'upskilling' and 'reskilling' reverberate in the corridors of higher educational institutions. The recent push towards skilling and vocational education has reignited the debate on liberal versus vocational education highlighting the academic-vocational divide.

Development

In 387 BCE, Plato's academy in Athens – considered the prototype of a modern university – focussed on elenchus and dialectics. The aim was to train youth to be aware of inbuilt contradictions and inconsistencies in discourses and to direct their thinking in terms of contraries. Aristotle, an alumnus, continued this tradition with his Lyceum, established in 334 BCE.

In modern times, Wilhelm von Humboldt, the architect of Berlin University founded in 1810, proclaimed that a university had a dual mandate: teaching and undertaking research. The Humboldtian model of a university as a research-intensive institution is being followed in the West currently.

John Newman, in his *The Idea of a University* (1852) argued that knowledge is its own end. Liberal education, according to him, is the "process of training, by which the intellect – instead of being formed or sacrificed to some particular or accidental purpose, some specific trade or profession, or study or science – is disciplined for its own sake, for the perception of its own proper object, and for its own highest culture". He pointed out that liberal education enables students to have "a cultivated intellect, a delicate taste, a candid, equitable, dispassionate mind, a noble and courteous bearing in the conduct of life". He made a valuable distinction between liberal knowledge and useful knowledge, and correlated liberal knowledge with university education.

In recent times, India's National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) categorised higher educational institutions into three clusters: research-intensive universities, teaching-intensive universities, and autonomous colleges vested with the power to award degrees. All three are called upon to focus on teaching and research, but at different levels.

Skills gap

Today, CEOs of reputed companies lament the skills gap in students despite them having gone through undergraduate (and, in some cases, postgraduate) studies and are desperate to close the gap to get hold of industry fit workers. To achieve this, a generous dose of vocational education is recommended so that students are also trained in skills through certificates and diplomas in addition to their degree. The UGC document, "Guidelines for Introduction of Bachelor of Vocation (B.Voc.) Programme in Universities and Colleges under the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF), 2015" mirrors this changing situation: "It has been a long-felt necessity to align higher education with the emerging needs of the economy so as to ensure that the graduates of higher education system have adequate knowledge and skills for employment and entrepreneurship." Accordingly, three skill development schemes have been introduced: Community College, B.Voc. Degree Programme, and Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendras (DDUKKs).

Should higher educational institutions, especially universities, teach and pursue research or engage in skill development? While some argue that the Humboldtian model should not be tampered with, others point out that universities should meet industry requirements and focus on skill-development. A few others, adopting a pragmatic stance, point out that universities should do both – teach and pursue higher-order research and also prepare students to secure gainful employment.

Colleges and universities should train students to think analytically and equip them with the skills to translate concepts and ideas into action. This will ensure the connection between classrooms and the real world so that concepts and theories can be applied in real life and real-world issues are also discussed in classrooms for viable solutions.

Job descriptions are vital. Let universities and postgraduate colleges relentlessly pursue research in addition to teaching. They should not be burdened with skill development though students should acquire the skills of transforming and crystallising thoughts into action. Let Community Colleges, ITIs and DDUKKs and, to some extent, undergraduate colleges take up skill development in a full-fledged manner.

But, even here, a dose of liberal education is required; for, ultimately, the purpose of higher education is to enhance students' intellectual capacities. Diluting the mandate of higher educational institutions for short-term gains and converting them into skill developers and managers would be detrimental in the long-run. An excessive focus on skill development will eventually lead to an impoverished intellectual climate in higher educational institutions, especially in universities.

Different categories of institutions should adhere to their respective mandates and their roles and responsibilities should not be diluted or mixed up. An entire generation brought up largely on skill development may not be endowed with corresponding cognitive and meta-cognitive competencies, which would be a recipe for disaster.

The writer is Emeritus Professor, Gandhigram Rural Institute Deemed-to-be University, Tamil Nadu

SCHOLARSHIPS

Wells Mountain Foundation Scholarship
Provided by Wells Mountain Initiative (WMI).
Eligibility: Those applying to or currently enrolled in their first UG degree and plan to live and work in their home country after graduation and show financial need. Prior participation in volunteering and a commitment towards it during the period of studies is required.
Rewards: Up to $3,000 per annum.
Application: Online
Deadline: March 1
www.b4s.in/edge/WMFS1

Inlaks Shivdasani Scholarships
Offered by the non-profit Inlaks Shivdasani Foundation.
Eligibility: Open to Indian passport holders who have a first-class or equivalent degree from recognised Indian institutions and have scored 65% or equivalent in Arts-related subjects; and 70% or equivalent in Maths and Science-related subjects and have received a valid deferred offer letter for the current academic year and hold an English language certification.
Rewards: $1,00,000 and other benefits (one-time).
Application: Online
Deadline: March 31
www.b4s.in/edge/INLAKS1

SBIF Asha Scholarship for Overseas Education
An initiative of the SBI Foundation under its Integrated Learning Mission (ILM).
Eligibility: Indian students belonging to SC and ST categories pursuing a Master's or PG course (any year) at a premier institution outside India and have secured at least 75% or above in their previous academic year. Annual family income should be ₹600,000.
Rewards: Up to ₹20,00,000 or 50% of course-related expenses (whichever is less)
Application: Online
Deadline: March 31
www.b4s.in/edge/SBIFS12

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

Toon trouble

The power to block content must be used sparingly

The order of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, directing the removal of a cartoon featuring the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, from a Tamil magazine's website, is unwarranted and may not fall under any of the permissible grounds for such removal. Vikatan Plus, an online-only magazine published by the Vikatan group, has decided to take legal steps to challenge the order. It had earlier defended the content at a hearing before an inter-departmental committee constituted under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. The Ministry's move against the cartoon goes against both freedom of expression and freedom of the press. The cartoon is a piece of trenchant political commentary, as it depicted Mr. Modi shackled in chains in the presence of United States President Donald Trump. This is an apparent reference to criticism voiced in some quarters that Mr. Modi failed to protest against the ill-treatment of Indian illegal immigrants deported from the U.S. The Prime Minister's approach to a foreign policy issue cannot be immune to symbolic denunciation through a cartoon. It is even more concerning that the Vikatan website itself has been rendered inaccessible to some users, apparently based on undisclosed orders or informal instructions to web service providers.

While a formal order to take down content is provided for in law, it will be wholly untenable if the website was sought to be blocked without recourse to established procedure. The claim that the website has been inaccessible to some since February 15 has not been denied so far. Section 69A of the Information Technology Act empowers the government to block content on specified grounds, including in the interest of "friendly relations with foreign States or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of a cognisable offence", but it is not known which of these grounds has been invoked, as the order is confidential. How an order passed in the exercise of a statutory power can be deemed a secret is inexplicable. Even in times like the present when taking offence is a national pastime as well as a reason for several Chief Ministers to unleash the police on their detractors, cartoons ought to enjoy greater immunity than the written word. In this case, it is doubtful if political criticism through a cartoon can be deemed to affect friendly ties with the U.S. or undermine public order. The Centre would do well to reverse the blocking order soon. The power to block content ought to be used sparingly, mainly to combat offensive content such as hate speech, incitement to violence and child pornography, but not in deference to a political demand and without regard to freedom of expression.

Long roots

Entrenched patriarchal biases must be erased from society, government

If institutions are serious about rooting out sexism, they must walk the talk. Instead of merely celebrating the entry of more women in the workforce, they have to provide an enabling atmosphere for those on the rolls. In a judgment last week, the Supreme Court of India showed its intent by declaring that with more and more women joining judicial service, it was time for the judiciary to be more cognisant of their well-being at the workplace. Reinstating two women judicial officers of Madhya Pradesh who had been sacked for "inefficiency", despite the fact that one of them had suffered a miscarriage, Justice B.V. Nagarathna said it was not enough to "find comfort solely in the growing number of female judicial officers if we are unable to secure for them a sensitive work environment." The judgment set aside the ouster of two civil judges, Sarita Choudhary and Aditi Kumar Sharma, terming the termination orders "punitive, arbitrary and illegal". That Justice Nagarathna, one of two women judges in the Court, which has a sanctioned strength of 34, had to step in, is an indication of the long and difficult fight for gender equality, and the need for change in mindsets and reform. In several past verdicts too, the Court had drawn attention to gender stereotyping and discrimination against women.

In her judgment, Justice Nagarathna underscored the importance of having more women in the judiciary, and this holds true of other branches of the government such as the legislature and the executive. Greater representation of women will ensure better understanding of their needs and lead to better policies. The freedom from discrimination or equal protection of the laws during pregnancy and maternity are precious rights for the women workforce, she noted. Just as motherhood brings joy, a miscarriage has a deep psychological, physical and mental impact on women, and the onus is on policymakers to be aware of this and act accordingly. While gender cannot be an excuse for poor performance, it is incredible that the Court had to intervene to call out a wrong on a basic issue such as maternal rights. In doing so, the Court has also, yet again, reminded not only those in power but also the larger society, that age-old, entrenched patriarchal systems have no place in a country aspiring to emerge as a developed economy. If women are not provided a larger role in decision-making, their concerns will remain invisible to policy. To achieve that goal, education has to be accessible to girls in a non-discriminatory manner. At work, they must be assured of a safe and healthy environment as a basic right and guarantee.

The student and the three language debate

R. Seshasayee

is a corporate director and author

In the rhetoric of partisan politics surrounding the three language formula, unsurprisingly, the most important stakeholder has been forgotten: the student.

First, it is the child who goes to a public (government) school, and no one else, who should be at the very centre of this debate. Students in public schools form about 55% of the school enrolment in Tamil Nadu. Children in private schools (largely from the upper class) increasingly rely on supplemental learning beyond school hours, i.e., coaching or tuition classes, which a public school student cannot afford. The critical question is this: is learning three (instead of two) languages essential to enable a child from a public school to compete with other more privileged candidates in the job market and become a productive, value-adding citizen?

Second, while the National Education Policy (NEP) is path-breaking on many accounts, there are a few provisions that ignore the ground realities of public education in India, especially at the primary and secondary levels. The three language formula is one such issue.

A problematic hypothesis

The NEP declares that the compulsory learning of three languages is intended to improve the cognitive ability of students, enable mobility for employment and promote national integration. This very hypothesis is a problematic one.

Language is a necessary tool for acquiring knowledge and for communication. However, with the breathtaking progress in technology, particularly Artificial Intelligence, language proficiency itself will gradually lose its significance as a tool for knowledge acquisition. You could post your query in any language, in say Google Gemini (even children in a public school will hopefully soon have access either through a smart classroom or a smartphone), and get an answer instantly.

In the years ahead, this access will only get cheaper and better. There is of course indisputable evidence linking language skills with cognitive abilities, but none which establishes that proficiency in more languages will proportionately improve cognitive abilities. In fact, research suggests quite the contrary – that a strong foundation in a child's mother tongue is essential before introducing additional language(s).

A third language will certainly enable better communication with the community that speaks that language. But that is a choice that most adults make as a part of the profession they choose. Tamil '*thambis*' quickly learn Hindi when they join the Indian Army and thrive famously. Tamilian salesmen speak flawless Marathi when they sell their wares in Maharashtra.

> There is no academic merit in thrusting a third language on students; there could be a risk of raising a generation that is handicapped to compete nationally

Third, the state of primary education is pathetic, nationally and in Tamil Nadu, as highlighted in the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) Survey 2024. Despite some good initiatives in recent times, 88% of class three students in Tamil Nadu still lack basic literacy proficiency.

The challenge is even greater with the second language, English. Many top-scoring students, even from English-medium public schools, struggle to adapt when transitioning to English-medium instruction in college, particularly in professional courses, because in the school, they are taught in Tamil, not in English.

Focus on teaching and learning

The response to the shocking state of quality in primary (and carried forward to secondary and higher secondary) education is to massively improve teaching quality and learning outcomes, and not to add one more language. There is a finite time available at school to 'cover' all subjects. With acquisition of knowledge getting easier and quicker through technology, education should increasingly focus on developing attributes such as curiosity, critical thinking and creativity, which are critical to success in the 21st century. There is a need to provide more time and space in the curriculum for inculcating these traits, rather than thrusting a third language. Within this finite time, it is important to enable deeper learning than wider learning.

Fourth, it is not clear how public schools would be able to find adequate and competent teachers for a third language, even assuming that every parent chooses Hindi and not a variety of other languages. There is every reason to fear the quality of teachers leading to inferior learning. Despite Tamil Nadu having one of the highest per-child education budgets in the country, 80%-90% of the budget is spent on teacher salaries, while infrastructure suffers. The cost of having third language teachers could eat into the funds available for infrastructure.

Language is a great anchor of cultural values. National unity is indeed a foundational value, and the Constitution provides for the propagation of Hindi. While a common language is desirable, it would be at the tail end of cultural initiatives to promote unity. A spirit of respect for other cultures and a shared sense of history should be an integral part of learning. A third language is neither the only nor a superior way to inculcate these values.

That said, education should lead to a choice of gainful employment opportunities. So long as opportunities for public school students are available within the State, either from government, private enterprise or self employment (the case thus far), the need for a third language may not be critical. However, the system outcomes must facilitate wider choices for students from Tamil Nadu to compete for the best educational and employment opportunities, nationally and even globally.

So long as English continues to be an official language in examinations for central services, the defence services and the judiciary, students from Tamil Nadu should be able to compete at a national level, as they have done successfully for several decades. Better teaching/learning of English would improve their competitiveness in the world, which is increasingly looking for English-literate service providers.

The politics and the student

So, what is the way forward? There are two dimensions to this problem: politico-cultural and child development.

The right or wrong of the ruling party's politics on the issue is not the subject of this article. But it is important to acknowledge ,from a child development perspective, that it is a two-front political battle, i.e., one, stopping Hindi 'imposition' on the State; and two, fighting to retain the robust status of English nationally. The second is a more challenging task.

The State's politics may not harm the future of students, as long as English continues as an official language at the Centre with equal force and usage.

However, if, nationally the landscape is likely to change with Hindi progressively replacing English (in spirit even if not in letter because of constitutional safeguards), the State's politics should factor this reality and seriously consider insulating the child's development from the crossfire of political battles.

Here is a possible approach that has the interests of the child in mind.

Since there is no academic merit in thrusting a third language on the child, particularly at the primary level, Hindi could be offered, as an option as a third language from middle public school. This could be started in schools in the district headquarters and progressively expanded to other schools, depending on demand, which, in turn, will depend on the momentum of Hindi replacing English at the national level.

A rigid political position could result in a generation of students that is handicapped to compete nationally. This issue should be a debate and a discussion, and not a war that destroys the future of the young.

Multiple bullies at work, out to create a 'multipolar world'

Kavita Krishnan

is an activist and writer

Why has U.S. President Donald Trump thrown a public tantrum and refused to deal with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy? It is time to remember what is at stake for Ukraine. Who better to tell it like it is than John Mearsheimer, Realist advocate of a multipolar world order, who has consistently accused the U.S.-led West of provoking Russia to war.

Exactly a week after Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Mearsheimer explained in a media interview that any peace deal with Mr. Putin would require Ukraine to give up not just some territory or hopes of North Atlantic Treaty Organization membership. It would be nothing short of its democracy. He told an interviewer that Mr. Putin "wants to install in Kyiv a pro-Russian government, a government that is attuned to Moscow's interests...."A Ukraine that was a liberal democracy, he said, was "from a Russian perspective...an existential threat."

But would it not be imperialism, asked the interviewer, to tell Ukrainians that they cannot be a liberal democracy? Mearsheimer replied, "It's not imperialism; this is great-power politics. When you're a country like Ukraine and you live next door to a great power like Russia, you have to pay careful attention to what the Russians think, because if you take a stick and you poke them in the eye, they're going to retaliate."

'Democracy is not realistic'

Democracy simply is not realistic in a multipolar world, said Mearsheimer. "In an ideal world, it would be wonderful if the Ukrainians were free to choose their own political system and to choose their own foreign policy. But in the real world, that is not feasible."

Today, Mr. Trump is eager to give Mr. Putin the regime change he wants. He calls Mr. Zelenskyy a "dictator"with a "4% approval rating," and has suggested more than once that peace is possible only if Mr. Zelenskyy steps down.

What kind of Ukraine do Mr. Putin and Mr. Trump want? Look at the other nations that "live next door to a great power like Russia," and the answer is clear. Democratic protests in Belarus and Kazakhstan have been brutally suppressed with the help of the Russian military. Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko declares, "It's better to have a dictatorship like in Belarus than a democracy like Ukraine." The Ukrainians obviously disagree.

> A growing illiberal international project is posing the biggest threat to democracy, people and peace in the world

It should be remembered that far from instigating Mr. Zelenskyy to stay and fight, former U.S. President Joe Biden had done all he could to force him to flee, hoping that it would appease Mr. Putin and avert a prolonged war.

In January 2022, Mr. Biden had declared that NATO would be divided in case of a "minor incursion", and Zelenskyy had to "remind the great powers that there are no minor incursions and small nations".

Mr. Biden had evacuated the U.S. embassy from Kyiv and said, days before the Russian invasion, that "it may be the wise choice for President Zelenskyy to leave Ukraine". After the invasion, Mr. Zelenskyy had to again tell the U.S. that he was looking for ammunition, and not a ride.

The wider border of this project

Ukraine is not the only country where Mr. Trump and Mr. Putin want a regime in their own image. U.S Vice President J.D. Vance and Mr. Trump's oligarch aide Elon Musk urged Germans to vote for the far-right anti-immigrant AfD. Mr. Vance told the European Union (EU) in Munich that Mr. Trump wanted to liberate European people from their "internal threat" – immigrants and the liberal democratic leadership that let them into Europe.

For the past decade, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has declared making his country an "illiberal democracy" as his goal, and to turn the EU into an illiberal project. Since then, Mr. Putin has put his weight behind that project in every way. And Mr. Vance made it clear that Mr. Trump, "the new sheriff in town", wants the same: an EU aligned with Christian values, not universal human rights and democratic standards; an EU where member-nations will face no censure for passing Putin-style laws banning "gay propaganda".

Mr. Orbán has the distinction of refusing to honour the International Criminal Court's warrants issued against Mr. Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Mr. Trump and Mr. Netanyahu voted for Mr. Putin in the United Nations. Mr. Trump treats Gaza and Ukraine as pieces of real estate at the mercy of the genocidal bully next door. Mr. Trump has branded ethnic cleansing in Gaza with his name, turning it into an obscene AI-generated Nero's Feast. He turned peace talks in the Oval Office into reality TV where the most powerful man in the world and his henchmen and media bully an elected leader of an invaded and occupied nation.

The national bullies are acting in concert to create a "multipolar world" – a world safe for all bullies and bigots. It is high time we stopped imagining that multiple bullies make the playground safer, and that "multipolar" non-western tyrants are the lesser evil "regardless of the internal character" of the regimes involved.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has declared support for a multipolar world. Mr Putin has always insisted that there are "two Wests", and that his quarrel is with the West of universal democratic principles and rules; an illiberal U.S., United Kingdom and EU are welcome to the multipolar world.

It is better late than never

It is the growing assertion of an illiberal international project (led by Mr. Trump, Mr. Putin, Mr. Netanyahu, and China's Xi Jinping, and including Narendra Modi, Mr. Orban and European fascists) that poses the greatest threat to democracy, people, peace, and the planet today.

To insist that the rise of this new illiberal international is just the West versus the Rest "business as usual" is moral bankruptcy and suicidal folly – exactly as it is to quibble over the semantics of Mr. Modi's project of an illiberal Hindu-only India.

It is better late than never to take on the illiberal international and defend universalist human rights, democratic solidarity. A good start would be for Indians defending democracy to show solidarity with Ukraine defending itself from the Putin-Trump tyranny.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

At the White House

The manner in which U.S. President Donald Trump and U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance treated the Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, at the White House meet is definitely a pointer to the fascist attitude and the arrogance of right-wing arm-twisters. But Mr. Zelenskyy left like the proverbial David. Whether he is going to win the war or not for his people needs to be seen, but he has definitely won many a heart.

Tharcius S. Fernando,
Chennai

Mr. Trump's remarks seemed to ignore the reality that Russia is the aggressor in this war. The consequences will extend beyond Kyiv. A Russian victory would embolden authoritarian regimes worldwide. In the end, this is not just about Ukraine. It is about the credibility of the democratic world in the face of grave aggression.

S.S. Paul,
Chakdaha, Nadia, West Bengal

It was fatuous of Mr. Trump to have expected Mr. Zelenskyy to sign on the dotted line without offering any security guarantee. His arrogance was exposed by the use of the phrase of a 'third world war'. To arrange such a sensitive meeting in full media glare was the height of diplomatic stupidity.

S.V. Venkatakrishnan,
Bengaluru

The absurd and acrimonious Trump-Vance-Zelenskyy interaction is a new low in diplomacy. But the response, somewhat muted, by Europe, except Hungary, is positive. Who will bell the (Trump) cat?

Ayyasseri Raveendranath,
Aranmula, Kerala

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Centring care in India's economic policy

Sreerupa

Research Fellow and Program Lead at Institute of Social Studies Trust

Harshita Kumari

Associate, Public Policy at TQH (The Quantum Hub) Consulting

The Union Budget for 2025 allocated a record ₹4,49,028.68 crore to the Gender Budget (GB), marking a 37.3% increase from FY24 and accounting for 8.86% of the total Budget. This rise is primarily due to the inclusion of the PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, which accounts for 24% of the GB, rather than being driven by substantial investments in care infrastructure or new gender-responsive schemes. Despite this increase, critical investments in care infrastructure remain absent, reinforcing the persistent invisibilisation of care work in India's economic planning. While the Economic Surveys of 2023-24 and 2024-25 highlight care infrastructure as central to women's empowerment, the current Budget misses the opportunity to make tangible investments to strengthen India's care economy in line with its socio-economic realities.

Globally, women spend an average of 17.8% of their time on unpaid care and domestic work (UCDW), with women in the Global South bearing higher burdens. India is especially concerning, as Indian women shoulder 40% more of this burden than their counterparts in South Africa and China. The International Labour Organization reports that 53% of Indian women remain outside the labour force due to care responsibilities, compared to just 1.1% of men, underscoring entrenched inequities. For poor and marginalised women, this burden is severe as women in low-income families often juggle 17-19 hours of daily tasks, balancing paid work with domestic duties, intensifying 'time poverty', and eroding their well-being.

Feminist economists from the Global South emphasise that unpaid work in these regions encompasses a broader range of tasks compared to the Global North, extending beyond household care giving to include work on family farms, water and fuel collection, cleaning, and cooking. Limited access to essential infrastructure – such as water, clean energy, and sanitation – means women spend up to 73% of their time on these unpaid activities. For example, women spend nearly five hours daily collecting water, compared to 1.5 hours for men. Climate change exacerbates this burden, with water-related unpaid labour in India projected to reach $1.4 billion by 2050 under a high-emissions scenario. This stems from low public investment in care infrastructure and entrenched social norms that assign care work to women.

Globally, women spend an average of 17.8% of their time on unpaid care and domestic work, with women in the Global South bearing higher burdens

Solutions ahead

The Economic Survey 2023-24 highlights that direct public investment equivalent to 2% of GDP could generate 11 million jobs while easing the care burden. Applying the expanded 'Three R framework'—Recognise, Reduce, Redistribute, and Represent – can ensure policies are both contextually relevant and transformative. The first step is recognising the full spectrum of UCDW women perform. India's 2019 Time Use Survey marked a milestone in acknowledging this issue, revealing that women spend an average of seven hours daily on UCDW. Despite the policy benefits that these surveys carry, their costs can make implementation challenging. One solution is to integrate Time-use modules into existing household surveys.

The second step is reducing the UCDW burden through time-saving technologies and expanded access to affordable care infrastructure. The Centre has acknowledged gaps in access to essential services by extending the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) until 2028, aiming for 100% potable water coverage. However, funding delays and underutilisation hinder implementation. While the scheme's Budget declined by 4.51% from last year's Budget Estimates (BE), it saw a 195% jump over Revised Estimates (RE), highlighting allocation-spending gaps. With less than half of villages having functional household tap connections, JJM requires stronger implementation and water sustainability measures.

Expanding childcare centres, eldercare support, and assistive technologies would ease women's care burden, and boost their workforce participation.

The third key step is redistributing care work – from the home to the State and within households. The newly announced ₹1 lakh crore Urban Challenge Fund, with ₹10,000 crore allocated for FY 2025-26, can be transformative. This will finance up to 25% of bankable projects, encouraging private and public sector participation in urban redevelopment, water, and sanitation initiatives. By leveraging this fund, India can scale up pilot care infrastructure models already under way through the Smart Cities Mission. Taking inspiration from Bogotá's Care Blocks, which centralise care giving services to reduce women's unpaid work, this approach aligns with the fund's broader goal of sustainable urban development.

Finally, women's representation in decision-making and implementation is crucial for creating gender-transformative policies. Excluding women from this leaves them vulnerable to policies that fail to address their lived realities. In fact, involving women in decision-making processes enhances their effectiveness significantly, sometimes by six to seven times.

With the Centre's emphasis on Nari Shakti as a driver of economic growth, India has the opportunity to set a global example for a gender and care-sensitive economy. However, the current Budget falls short by not prioritising care as a central pillar. A more deliberate, well-funded strategy is necessary to ensure that care work is not treated as an afterthought but as a core component of inclusive growth.

A battle between fishing and mining

Kerala fishers protest offshore mining, fearing it will destroy marine ecosystems

STATE OF PLAY

Navamy Sudhish
navamy.sudhish@thehindu.co.in

The coastal communities in Kerala are currently caught in a wave of unrest following the Centre's plans for offshore mining, which they believe will ravage the fragile marine ecosystem and bring an end to their traditional way of life. Strong opposition erupted when proceedings to auction offshore mineral blocks began after an amendment to the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002. As the Ministry of Mines issued a notice inviting tenders, fishers launched protests and demonstrations, and the Kerala Fisheries Coordination Committee was formed to resist the move. The coastal hartal on February 27 immobilised the sector for 24 hours, and fishers are now gearing up for a Parliament march on March 12.

The 2023 amendment to the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Bill introduced reforms allowing private sector participation in offshore mining. This includes granting production leases and composite licences through competitive auctions.

Surveys conducted by the Geological Survey of India revealed 1,53,996 million tonnes of lime mud within the Exclusive Economic Zone off the Gujarat and Maharashtra coasts, 745 million tonnes of construction-grade sand off Kerala coast, 79 million tonnes of heavy mineral placers in the inner-shelf and mid-shelf off Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra, as well as polymetallic ferromanganese (Fe-Mn)

nodules and crusts in the Andaman Sea and Lakshadweep Sea. Substantial reserves of construction-grade sand were found in Kerala at water depths between 22 and 45 meters, specifically in the offshore areas of Ponnani, Chavakkad, Kochi, Alappuzha, and Kollam.

At present, bids have been invited for 13 offshore areas under Tranche 1, including three blocks of lime mud off the Gujarat coast, three blocks of construction sand off the Kerala coast, and seven blocks of polymetallic nodules and crusts off the coast of Great Nicobar Island. The three blocks selected for mining off the Kerala coast are located in 'Kollam Parappu' also known as Quilon Bank, one of the richest fishing zones in the southwest coast. The fishing hub is frequented by mechanised vessels, mesh gill net boats, and fishers using hook and line from both Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Kollam Parappu is also a crucial habitat teeming with commercially valuable marine species.

Fishers believe that mining operations in the area will destroy marine habitats, deplete fish stocks, and render their most-productive fishing grounds irredeemable. They also worry that mining will increase existing fishing pressure and escalate conflicts between traditional fishers and the mechanised sector. If offshore mining destroys major fishing grounds, such as Kollam Parappu, it will force vessels, including those from other States, to operate in coastal waters, leading to frictions and clashes.

The proposed mining site off the Kollam coast is also a biodiversity hotspot with high species richness, and essential for supporting marine life forms.

An ongoing study by the University of Kerala's Department of Aquatic Biology & Fisheries warns that mining operations can cause catastrophic damage to ecosystems, harming the livelihood of fishers. It observes that the exceptional diversity of solitary and soft corals in the Kollam region will be threatened by sand mining, as the extraction process will cause sediment plumes, increasing turbidity and impacting the composition of the water column. This means declining water quality, disruption of food webs, and deterioration of spawning grounds. Apart from this, there is the need to evaluate the economic costs associated with using freshwater to wash extracted sand.

While discussions continue about the absence of proper environmental impact studies and the consequences of offshore mining, the full extent of its potential impact is still unknown. As marine ecosystems lack defined boundaries, there is an inherent uncertainty surrounding the aftermath of extraction. The breakdown of ecosystems and habitats can take an all-new dimension by crossing expansive territories, resulting in unforeseen outcomes. A dip in production or the steady depletion of marine resources may also trigger a chain reaction, jeopardising everything from food security and the survival of coastal communities.

Women in South India, Delhi, Punjab have higher levels of obesity

High consumption of fried foods and aerated drinks is linked to rising obesity rates

DATA POINT

Nitika Francis
Kushal Varma J.V.

About a fourth of men and women in India were either 'overweight' or 'obese' in 2019-21, an increase of 4 percentage points from 2015-16, underscoring the rising health risk posed by obesity in the country. While the problem is prominent among women in most South Indian States, as well as in Delhi and Punjab, the rate of increase in obesity among men was faster. Moreover, less than a fifth of men and women in 2019-21 could be categorised as 'thin', a significant decline from the figures in 2015-16, according to data from the National Family Health Survey.

Last week, in his monthly radio address Mann Ki Baat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi cautioned against the rising obesity rates in India, particularly among children. He also advised people to reduce the intake of oil by 10% each month to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Increase in BMI

The average body mass index (BMI), which measures body fat relative to a person's weight and height, is considered as a metric of obesity.

While the average BMI for Indian males increased by 0.6 points from 21.8 in 2015-16 to 22.4 in 2019-21, the corresponding rise in BMI for women was 0.5 points from 21.9 to 22.4 in the same period.

Chart 1 shows the gender-wise change in overweight and obesity levels in India based on BMI figures. Any person with a BMI between 25.0 and 29.9 would be considered 'overweight' and an index above 30 would be considered 'obese'.

In 2015-16, 15.5% of women in India were overweight, and in 2019-21 these figures had risen to 17.6%. The rise in the share of men categorised as overweight was higher than women in the same period. Between 2015-16 and 2019-21, the share of overweight men increased by three points from 15.9% to 18.9%. The share of obese women increased from 5.1% in 2015-16 to 6.4% in 2019-21, but the corresponding increase in obese men was by one point from 3% to 4%, during the same period.

Chart 2 shows the gender-wise change in mildly and moderately thin levels in India based on BMI figures. While a BMI between 17.0 and 18.4 is categorised as 'mildly thin', all figures under 17.0 are considered 'moderately/severely thin'. The share of mildly thin women reduced from 13.3% in 2015-16 to 11% in 2019-21 and among men the reduction was from 12.2% to 9.6% in the same period. The share of moderately/severely thin women decreased from 9.6% to 7.7% between 2015-16 and 2019-21. The same figures for men declined to 6.6% from 8% in the same period.

Chart 3 shows the State-wise change in obesity and overweight levels among women. While the largest increase in these levels was seen in Delhi and Punjab, obesity among women from many southern States –including Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Telangana – were among the highest in the country.

Chart 4 shows the State-wise change in obesity and overweight levels among men. Again, Delhi features at the top of the list with the most obese and overweight men in the country. But so do men from the Southern States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka.

This rise in obesity corresponds with the continuing consumption of fried foods and aerated drinks among men and women. Over 40% of men and women recorded munching on fried foods in 2019-21. About 16% of women and 25% of men consumed aerated drinks during the same period.

Kushal Varma J.V. is interning with The Hindu Data Team

Packing on the kilos

The data for the charts were sourced from the National Family Health Survey Reports (NFHS-4 and NFHS-5)

Chart 1: The chart shows the gender-wise change in overweight and obesity levels in India (in %)

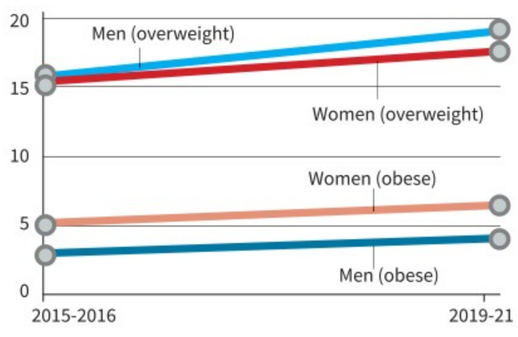


Chart 2: The chart shows the gender-wise change in mildly and moderately thin levels in India (in %)

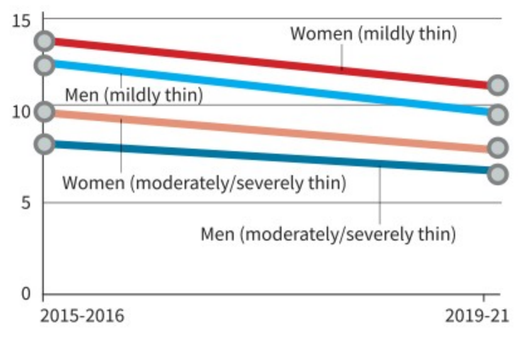


Chart 3: State-wise change in share of overweight/obese women between NFHS-4 (2015-16) and NFHS-5 (2019-2021) (in %)

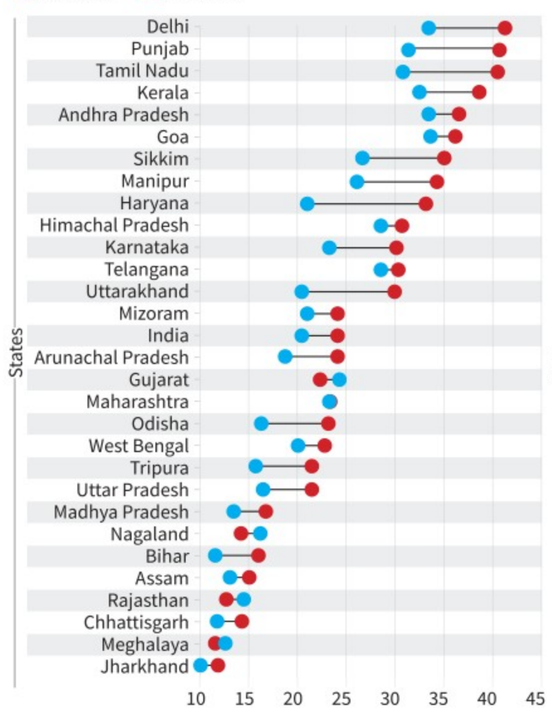
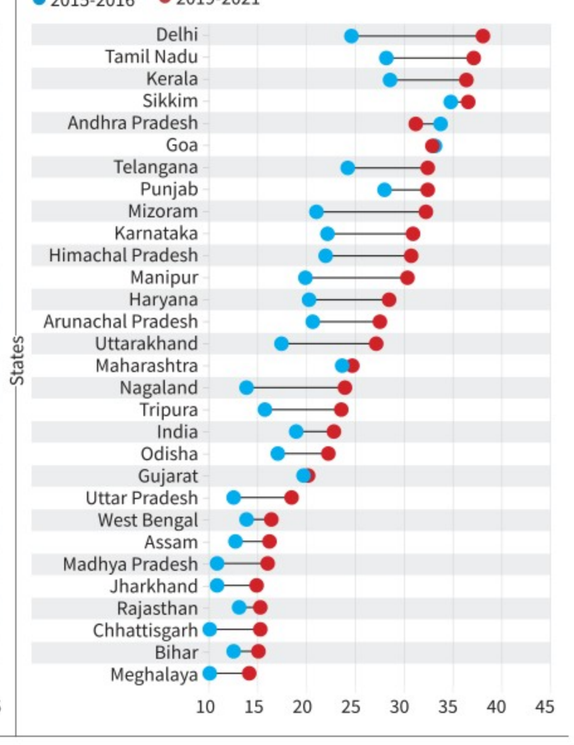


Chart 4: State-wise change in share of overweight/obese men between NFHS-4 (2015-16) and NFHS-5 (2019-2021) (in %)



FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 3, 1975

WHO boost for Indian medicine

New Delhi, March 2: Traditional systems of medicine are likely to get a boost if a proposal now before the World Health Organisation goes through.

The reported success of the Chinese health care programme has made the WHO evince interest in traditional systems of medicine in various countries, and a group of experts has been busy during the past few months collecting information about Ayurveda and other systems.

This group is said to have come to the conclusion that these systems can be assigned a useful role in national health services. The findings are expected to come up before the WHO General Assembly session in May, and if the recommendations are accepted by member countries, WHO assistance will be forthcoming for schemes to utilise Indian systems of medicine in the rural health care programme.

The WHO group has been on a study tour in India to have an idea of the role played by the Vaids and Hakims and the people's response. The group visited villages and small towns in Uttar Pradesh and had discussions with medical experts there. The experts have been convinced that practitioners of the Indian systems of medicine are playing a vital role in catering to the health needs not only in rural areas but also in towns, and the answer to the problem of rural medical care lies in deploying Vaids and Hakims.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 3, 1925

Earthquake in America.

New York, March 2: One man was killed and two women seriously injured through being shaken off the platform of an elevated railway at New York during the earthquake shock yesterday evening. The tremor was felt but seen half a minute and two minutes over a wide area in Canada and the United States. It was the most intense shock registered in New York State since 1755. Many big subway buildings were shaken, but no damage has been reported anywhere.

New Hampshire villagers proceeded to the Church fearing that the end of the world had come.

The Ottawa Seismograph reports indicate that the epicentre of the disturbance was 400 miles East of Ottawa in the vicinity of Saguanay River, Quebec.

From Page One

EC to remove same voter ID numbers

The EC said some electors from different States and Union Territories were allotted identical numbers/series by a decentralised and manual mechanism followed prior to shifting of the electoral roll database to the ERONET platform. "This resulted in certain State/UT CEO offices using the same EPIC alphanumeric series and leaving a scope for the possibility of duplicate EPIC numbers being allotted to electors in different Assembly Constituencies in different States/UTs," it said.

ERONET is a Web-based platform developed for election officials, in multiple languages and scripts, to handle all processes pertaining to registration, migration, and deletion of names from the electoral rolls.

The commission said that to allay any apprehension, it had decided to ensure allotment of unique EPIC numbers to every registered elector. "Any case of duplicate EPIC number will be rectified by allotting a unique EPIC number. The ERONET 2.0 platform will be updated to aid and assist in this process," it said.

Ms. Banerjee has accused the BJP of appointing several agencies for manipulating the electoral rolls in West Bengal with the blessings of the EC. She alleged that the electoral rolls of West Bengal were being manipulated so that the BJP could bring in people from other States to vote in the Assembly election in 2026.

'U.K., other nations will work on Ukraine deal'

Third, it would involve boosting Ukraine's defences and, finally, a "coalition of the willing" would guarantee the peace after any ceasefire.

Mr. Starmer indicated that some – not all – of the countries present at the summit would be part of this coalition.

Europe must "do the heavy lifting" for a peace deal, Mr. Starmer said, as he reiterated the need for any deal to have U.S. backing. The British Prime Minister suggested that Mr. Trump supported this, else he [Mr. Starmer] would not have been exploring the idea further. He also defended the U.S.'s reliability as an ally.

Following Friday's spat, Mr. Starmer said he was working as a "bridge" between Mr. Zelenskyy and Mr. Trump. "Yes I felt uncomfortable, nobody wants to see that," he told the BBC, reacting to the happenings at the Oval Office.

Mr. Starmer said he was very sure that Mr. Trump's motive was to achieve lasting peace. There is scepticism in Europe around Mr. Trump's motivations as he had declared a shift in U.S. foreign policy and, more recently, focused primarily on Ukraine signing a deal on a U.S.-Ukraine partnership to extract Ukrainian minerals.

Mr. Trump had called Mr. Zelenskyy a "dictator" last month and had accused Ukraine of starting the war. He has also been critical about the European Union, a traditional ally of the U.S. Last week, the U.S. voted with Russia against a United Nations General Assembly resolution drafted by the Europeans condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine and affirming Ukraine's sovereignty.

Following the Oval Office meeting, Mr. Zelenskyy had said the relationship with Mr. Trump could be salvaged and that he wanted Mr. Trump to "be more on our side". Mr. Trump has said he prioritises ending the war immediately, while Mr. Zelenskyy and Europe are focused on the terms and durability of any ceasefire.

Avoid splitting West: Meloni

Mr. Starmer is one of at least three intermediaries that have emerged between the Ukrainians and Americans. Mr. Macron and Italian Prime Minister Georgia Meloni, with whom Mr. Trump has relatively good inter-personal dynamics, have also spoken to the U.S. President over the weekend.

Ms. Meloni, who is close to Mr. Trump as well as to tech billionaire and U.S. government adviser Elon Musk, is one of the EU's most conservative leaders. She did not publicly put out a message of support to Mr. Zelenskyy following Friday's incident. However, under her, Italy has been a strong supporter of Ukraine since it was invaded by Russia just over three years ago.

Speaking to the press at her bilateral meeting with Mr. Starmer, Ms. Meloni said it was "very, very important" to avoid a split in the West, as she backed a "just and lasting" peace for Ukraine. The Italian premier has proposed a meeting between Mr. Trump and European leaders.

Kerala man killed in Army firing in Jordan

The police are investigating whether any fly-by-night recruitment agency had facilitated their travel.

Pradeep Kumar, Attaché, Embassy of India, Jordan, confirmed Periera's death in a communiqué to the External Affairs Ministry on February 28. Mr. Periera's family and the Kerala government have received a copy of the communication. Mr. Kumar wrote that the Jordanian security forces opened fire on the four-member group when they tried to enter Israel near the border of Karak district.

The communiqué said the security forces warned the group to desist from entering Israel. The security forces opened fire when they failed to comply. "One bullet hit Mr. Thomas in his head," the communiqué said.

Court orders FIR against ex-SEBI chief, five others

Market regulator says it will challenge order by Mumbai court; plaint alleges large-scale financial fraud, regulatory violations, corruption linked to the listing of a company on the BSE in 1994

Purnima Sah
MUMBAI

A special court here has directed the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) to register a first information report (FIR) against former SEBI Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch, three whole-time members of the market regulator, and two BSE officials on charges of alleged stock market fraud, regulatory violations, and corruption linked to the listing of a company in 1994.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) said it would take legal steps to challenge the order. The order comes just two days after Ms. Buch completed her tenure as SEBI chief.

In a detailed order dated March 1, special ACB court judge Shashikant Eknathrao Bangar observed: "The allegations disclose a cognizable offense, necessitating an investigation. There is prima facie evidence of regulatory lapses and collusion, requiring a fair and impartial probe. The inaction by law enforcement and SEBI necessitates judicial intervention under Section 156(3) CrPC." The ACB of Worli in Mumbai was directed to register an FIR under the relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code, the Prevention of Corruption Act, the SEBI Act, and other applicable laws. "The investigation shall be monitored by this Court. A status report shall be submitted within 30 days," the order said.

The SEBI said it would take legal steps to challenge the order, which came two days after Madhabi Puri Buch completed her tenure. ANI

The complaint in this case was filed by Sapan Shrivastava, 47, a legal reporter from Dombivali in Maharashtra's Thane district.

The complaint names Ms. Buch; SEBI's current whole-time members Ashwani Bhatia, Ananth Narayan G., and Kamlesh Chandra Varshney; and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) officials Pramod Agarwal, and Sundararaman Ramamurthy. The complainant sought investigation into alleged large-scale financial fraud, regulatory violations, and corruption.

The charges pertain to the alleged fraudulent listing of a company, Cals Refineries Ltd., on the stock exchange in 1994, with the active connivance of regulatory authorities, particularly SEBI, without compliance under the SEBI Act, 1992. The complainant contended that SEBI officials failed in their statutory duty, facilitated market manipulation, and enabled corporate fraud by allowing the listing of a company that did not meet the prescribed norms.

Cals Refineries was suspended from trading on the stock exchange in 2019, according to data on the BSE website.

SEBI to challenge order

In a statement, SEBI said it was not given time to respond and had not been served any notice, noting that the officials named in the order were not holding their current positions when Cals Refineries was listed three decades ago. "SEBI would be initiating appropriate legal steps to challenge this order and remains committed to ensuring due regulatory compliance in all matters," it said.

The BSE, in a separate statement, said the application was "frivolous and vexatious in nature". It added that no notice had been issued, and neither time nor opportunity had been granted to respond to the charges.

The BSE officials named in the order had not been holding positions at the exchange during the listing of Cals Refineries, it added. "As a responsible market institution, BSE remains committed to upholding regulatory compliance and ensuring transparency," the statement read.

Union Minister's daughter harassed in Maharashtra; 2 held

The police said the accused have been charged with stalking and other offences under BNS, POCSO

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

A Union Minister on Sunday complained to the Muktainagar police in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra demanding the immediate arrest of those involved in the harassment of her teenage daughter and her friends when they were participating in the Sant Muktai Yatra held on the occasion of Maha Sivaratri at Kothali village on Friday night.

A police official said, "The bodyguards who accompanied the girls have named seven persons in the first information report of which we have arrested two persons – Kiren Mali, 21, and a 17-year-old. We have formed a team to nab the rest of the accused. All the seven accused have been charged with stalking and other offences under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences [POCSO] Act. For taking photos and videos, Information Technology Act provisions have also been invoked against them."

One of the accused, Aniket Bhoi, 25, has four previous charges against him under Sections 324 and 326 of the Indian Penal Code that deal with the offence of voluntarily causing harm to someone using a dangerous weapon or method.

Speaking to pressperson, the Minister said, "I was in Gujarat when my daughter sought permission to go to the event. I had suggested she take security personnel and two or three staff members along. When my daughterand her friends went to the yatra, they were followed, pushed and harassed by a group of men."

"If such incidents can happen even under high security to an MP or a Union Minister's daughter, what is the fate of ordinary girls in the State?" she asked.

"My daughter told me that the same group of men misbehaved with her on February 24 at a public event," she said.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said, "Those who harassed the Union Minister's daughter are from a political party. The local police have arrested some of them and registered a case. There will be strict action taken against them."

Woman held in Haryana for thrashing, biting mother

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

The Haryana Police on Sunday arrested a woman after a video of her beating her mother, allegedly over a property dispute, went viral on social media platforms.

The police have charged Rita, a resident of Hisar, with criminal intimidation, voluntarily causing hurt, wrongful confinement and uttering obscene words under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Section 24 of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007.

In the three-minute video, Rita is allegedly seen biting and slapping her mother, while the elderly woman begs her to stop.

According to the first information report, Rita's brother Amardeep Singh informed that she had been harassing their mother to get the house transferred to her name.

Four more bodies pulled out in Uttarakhand

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

The bodies of the last four workers trapped by an avalanche at Uttarakhand's Mana village were recovered on Sunday, ending a 60-hour multi agency rescue operation at 10,500 feet above sea level amid heavy snowfall. The final death toll reached eight, though 23 trapped workers were safely pulled out by Indian Army and Indo-Tibetan Border Police teams who worked relentlessly for almost three days.

The disaster took place at a Border Roads Organisation construction site, located at the last village before the Chinese border, early in the morning on Friday. As the load of ice, snow, and rock hit the eight containers that 54 workers were using as shelter, 23 managed to flee from the spot, effecting a miraculous escape.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Sunday issued a 24-hour avalanche warning for the upper reaches of Uttarakhand and Jammu and Kashmir. Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Dhami said the State government is planning to put in place technology to provide an early warning of such disasters in the upper reaches of the Himalayan range, to avoid such disasters in future.

Lucky escape: After the 60-hour long rescue operation amid heavy snowfall, 23 trapped workers were safely pulled out. ANI

The deceased are Mohendar Pal from Kangra, and Harmensh Chand from Una, both in Himachal Pradesh; Jitendra Singh from Rampur, Manjeet Yadav from Mau, Alok Yadav from Kanpur, and Ashok from Fatehpur, all in Uttar Pradesh; and Arvind from Dehradun, and Anil Kumar from Rudrapur, both from Uttarakhand. The State said the bodies of the victims were being sent to their homes after a post mortem.

Search for the missing

The final leg of the rescue operation, searching for the last four missing workers, began on Sunday morning with the help of a drone-based intelligent buried object detection system which was airlifted from Delhi. Two members of the Tiranga Mountain Rescue Team and Robin, an avalanche rescue dog, also played a key role in finding the last three containers buried under the ice.

With the roads blocked by heavy snowfall, the Indian Army used five of its own helicopters, two choppers from the Indian Air Force, and one civilian helicopter to evacuate all the rescued workers from Mana to the Joshimath Military Hospital where they are being treated. Over 250 people from various rescue agencies participated in the operation.

Mr. Dhami thanked the agencies involved in the rescue operation, including teams from the local administration, Army, ITBP, and State Disaster Response Force, saying they had worked with indomitable courage, loyalty and dedication despite difficult circumstances.

Survivors' horror

For the workers who survived the tragedy, the nightmare is still fresh in their minds. Vijay Pal from Moradabad was sleeping in one of the BRO's eight metal containers on the fateful morning when a loud noise disturbed the pin-drop silence of the snow-laden valley.

"I heard a loud thud and then the container in which I was sleeping tumbled probably half a kilometre downwards. I closed my eyes thinking it's the end of my life but a few minutes later, when the container got stuck beneath the mountain of snow, the other workers and I managed to open the door and crawl out of it," he said.

Mr. Pal and a small group of fellow survivors walked to a nearby Army camp and stayed there till they were brought to Joshimath.

Vipin Kumar from Himachal Pradesh, who suffered an injury to his back, said that he had remained buried in the snow for about 15 minutes which numbed his senses. "After I realise that the avalanche had settled, I tried to move my body and managed to run. Had the Army post not been there at Mana, none of us would have survived," he said.

M.P. Minister must resign after 'begging' remark: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
BHOPAL

A day after Madhya Pradesh Cabinet Minister Prahlad Patel said people had got used to "begging" before the government, the Congress on Sunday termed it the ruling BJP's "arrogance" and sought the Minister's resignation.

At an event in Rajgarh district, Mr. Patel, a former Union Minister, said, "People have now got used to begging from the government. When politicians come, they are handed a bundle of documents. As soon as they get on to the stage, [people] garland them and place a petition in their hands. These are not good habits."

Prahlad Patel

"Develop a mindset of giving, instead of taking. I guarantee, you will be happy and help build a cultured society. Building this army of beggars will not make society strong but weakens it," he said.

Mr. Patel's remarks drew sharp criticism from the Opposition Congress, with its State unit president Jitu Patwari saying that the reason behind the BJP's "extreme level of arrogance" was because it had got one-sided vote from the public.

"Where should the public go with its problems, if not to the public representatives? Is your seeking of votes from the public begging or is it begging when the public demands its right?" Mr. Patwari asked in a video message, claiming that it was the "mindset" of the entire BJP.

"If this is not a [collective] mindset, then you should take Prahlad Patel's resignation," he said, taking a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Bhopal.

Congress worker was killed for her rise in politics, says mother

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

A day after a woman Congress worker's body was found stuffed inside a suitcase at Rohtak in Haryana, her mother on Sunday said fellow party workers or friends, jealous of her daughter's rising political stature within the party's State unit, could be behind the murder.

Savita Rani, mother of Himani Narwal, said the family would not perform her last rites till the culprits were arrested.

The police have constituted a Special Investigation Team under Rajneesh Kumar, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Sampla, to investigate the murder.

"My daughter even risked her life for the Congress. She neglected her studies and home for the past 10 years to focus on elections. It is only the elections and the party that have taken her life. She had made enemies only because of this," Ms. Rani said.

She said that some people could not digest the fact that Himani had gone ahead of them in politics at such a young age.

Asked whether she suspected anyone, Ms. Rani said, "These people could be from the party or even her friends."

More firearms surrendered in Manipur, say police

Press Trust of India
IMPHAL

Forty-two more firearms and cartridges have been surrendered by the public in five districts of ethnic strife-torn Manipur, the police said on Sunday.

The firearms were surrendered in Imphal West and East, Churachandpur, Bishnupur, and Tamenglong districts on Saturday, a police officer said.

Security forces also dismantled two illegal bunkers in Kangpokpi district. Another three illegal bunkers were dismantled at Wakan hill range in the adjoining area in Kangpokpi and Imphal East districts.

Shah asked Shinde to merge Sena with BJP: Raut

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Union Minister Amit Shah allegedly asked Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ekanth Shinde to merge his Shiv Sena with the BJP, Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said on Sunday.

He said Mr. Shah had declined Mr. Shinde's demand to consider him for the Chief Minister's position. In his column '*Rokhthok*' in the Sena (UBT) mouthpiece *Saamana*, Mr. Raut claimed to have the details of an alleged secret meeting between Mr. Shinde and Mr. Shah in Delhi recently.

"Mr. Shah told him that the BJP had over 125 MLAs and rightly deserved to lead the government. He offered to merge the Shiv Sena with the BJP if he wishes to claim the CM's post. To this, Mr. Shinde has shown his willingness to merge the robbed Shiv Sena into the BJP for the CM's chair," the column read. "If Mr. Shinde did not have a secret meeting with Mr. Shah, then he should publicly deny that and clarify his stand instead of speaking in riddles. Even CM Devendra Fadnavis had all the details of the meeting," Mr. Raut said.

EC engaging in damage control, says Trinamool

We won't let you steal elections, West Bengal's ruling party says adding poll panel has made an admission; party will continue booth-level scrutiny of voter lists, as directed by Bengal CM, it adds

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The Election Commission's statement on the duplication of voter ID card numbers is a damage-control exercise that proves the allegations of electoral roll manipulation made by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, the Trinamool Congress said on Sunday.

Ms. Banerjee had claimed that multiple voters, sometimes in different States, had the same electoral photo identity card (EPIC) number, alleging that this was evidence of voter fraud. In a statement, the EC clarified that "duplication in EPIC number does not imply duplicate or fake voters".

Hours later, the Trinamool pointed to the EC statement as an admission that there is duplication of EPIC numbers, adding that the poll body was engaging in a damage control exercise by claiming that this does not imply poll fraud.

"Election fraud of EPIC proportions! Smt. @MamataOfficial warned how @BJP4India was hijacking democracy, and now @ECISVEEP's own admission proves her right," the Trinamool posted on X. The party alleged that voter lists had been manipulated ahead of the recent Assembly elections in Maharashtra and Delhi, before a similar attempt was made in West Bengal, which is scheduled to go to the polls in 2026.

Levelling allegations: Mamata Banerjee had claimed that multiple voters, sometimes in different States, had same voter id number. ANI

"Duplicate EPIC numbers across States? A 'manual error' or a meticulously crafted scam to rig elections? They manipulated voter rolls in Maharashtra & Delhi and got away with it. They tried the same in Bengal but got caught," the Trinamool said.

Slams EC

"We won't let you steal elections," declared West Bengal's ruling party. In its post, the Trinamool claimed that the 'neutral' "EC has turned into BJP's poll-rigging department. Democracy is not a Modi-made product that can be tampered, tweaked, and sold off."

On February 27, Ms. Banerjee alleged that the BJP – with the blessings of the EC – was including voters from other States in the West Bengal voter list. She cited multiple voters with same EPIC numbers and directed Trinamool leaders to scrutinise the voter list. Several State Ministers were seen conducting a door-to-door scrutiny of voter lists on Saturday and Ms. Banerjere has set up a committee of senior party leaders to undertake this exercise.

The Trinamool general secretary Kunal Ghosh, said that the EC is in "damage control" mode, after Ms. Banerjee's allegations.

"After the conspiracy has surfaced, now the EC is into damage control. Complaints of the same voter's name in multiple States have been accepted as correct. There is no clear answer as to how this happened," Mr. Ghosh said.

Declaring that the Trinamool would not rely on the EC's assurances, he said that scrutiny of the voters list would continue. "This is the land of Bengal. The conspiracy of Maharashtra, Delhi will not work on this soil," he said.

Nurture all languages, no need for a confrontational stance, says Vice-President

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Wading into the Tamil Nadu government's clash with the Centre over the alleged imposition of Hindi, Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar questioned the need to assume a "confrontational stance" on the issue. All languages must be nurtured, he said.

"India is a land of rich languages. Sanskrit, Bangla, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, several languages. Even in Parliament, simultaneous translation takes place in 22 languages. Our civilisational ethos tells us inclusivity [is key]. Should there be a confrontational stance on language in the land of Bharat," the Vice-President asked, while speaking at the IIT-Hyderabad on Sunday.

"What a moment of pride for everyone when languages were put in the classical languages status recently. We have to nurture every language. Our languages have global outreach," Mr. Dhankhar said.

The Vice-President called for Indian youth to act as watchdogs against what he called "deviation" from the commitment to nationalism. "I call upon the youth of the country, social media has given you the power to take a call. If there is deviation from our commitment to nationalism, if there is assessment of development through a partisan prism, we need to be watchdogs," he said.

Comments on row: Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar during his visit to the IIT-Hyderabad on Sunday. MOHAMMED ARIF

Narratives that "emanate from forces that are financially fuelled only to injure Bharat" should be countered, he added.

Language war

Mr. Dhankhar's remarks come at a time when the Union and Tamil Nadu governments are caught in a war of words over the 2020 National Education Policy (NEP) and its three-language formula. In a recent letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said the Centre's decision to link fund disbursal for its flagship school education schemes – the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and PM SHRI Schools – to the States' implementation of the NEP was "fundamentally unacceptable".

In response, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said it was necessary to "rise above political differences".

Failure to implement NEP deprives Tamil Nadu's students of immense opportunities and resources, he argued.

Mr. Stalin, however, accused the Centre of seeking to "impose Hindi", camouflaging it under the three-language policy.

Mayawati removes nephew Akash Anand from all posts in BSP

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

Akash Anand, the nephew of Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati, was removed on Sunday as the party's national coordinator for the second time in a year. He was also relieved of all other party responsibilities.

The BSP chief replaced the 30-year-old with two national coordinators, Mr. Anand's father Anand Kumar and Rajya Sabha member Ramji Gautam. Ms. Mayawati said Mr. Anand's removal was "a necessary step", given the influence his father-in-law, former BSP leader Ashok Siddharth, had exerted on him.

Mayawati

'Not in BSP's interests'

She added that Mr. Siddharth's influence was already seen in Anand's political approach, which was not in the party's interests.

"We need to see how much influence Ashok Siddharth will exert on his daughter as well as on Akash, which as of now, doesn't seem to be positive. In such a situation, in the interest of the party and the movement, Akash is removed from all party responsibilities," said Ms. Mayawati in a statement after chairing a meeting of senior BSP office-bearers in Lucknow.

Ms. Mayawati also announced she would not appoint a successor. "I have taken a decision to not announce my successor as long as I am alive and will continue to handle party affairs," she said.

Congress steps up efforts to strengthen party in poll-bound States of Assam, Kerala and Bihar

NEWS ANALYSIS

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

After a series of defeats in the recent Assembly elections, the Congress has stepped up efforts to strengthen the organisation in the States where polls are scheduled in the next one year.

But in several States, the party will have to maintain a fine balance between building a strong organisation on the ground and meeting the expectations of its partners.

"I want to talk to you about the most important thing of accountability. You all will be held accountable for revamping the organisations in States and for all future election results," Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge said at a meeting of All India Congress Committee (AICC) incharge leaders and general secretaries on February 19.

Since then, Mr. Kharge, along with senior leaders Rahul Gandhi and K.C. Venugopal, has met the top leaders of Assam and Kerala, where Assembly elections are due in the early part of 2026, to discuss the strengthening of the organisation.

Laying the groundwork: Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi and K.C. Venugopal at a meeting in Delhi. ANI

Focus on Bihar

Bihar, where elections will be held later this year, is another focus State. The newly appointed AICC incharge, Krishna Allavuru, has made multiple trips to the State in the past 10 days in a bid to enthuse the party workers and revive the organisation on the ground.

Youth Congress chief Uday Bhanu Chhib, under Mr. Allavuru's directions, took out a motorcycle rally and *parivartan* yatra in the Muzzafarpur area of Bihar.

However, asked about how many Assembly seats the Congress would like to contest in Bihar, Mr. Allavuru sidestepped the question by saying talks had not begun.

There is growing pressure from local leaders that the party should demand a respectable number of seats from the Rashtriya Janata Dal. Congress Working Committee member Tariq Anwar took to social media platform X (formerly Twitter) to state that the party should clearly articulate its position on alliance.

"The priority should be to make our organisation strong and our new incharge has hit the ground running in that direction," Congress veteran Kishore Jha said. "We should get to contest at least in 100 seats".

Though the Congress was blamed for pulling down the RJD-led alliance in the 2020 Assembly election by winning only 19 of the 70 seats it contested, party leaders argue its strike rate was better than the RJD's in the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

"How can our party grow or become a serious player if we are given 40-50 seats out of the 243 seats. In such a scenario, ground-level workers leave and join a party where there is an opportunity to grow. It is better to go it alone if we are not treated with respect," Mr. Jha says.

Story of other States

However, the situation is quite the opposite in States such as Kerala and Assam, where the Congress leads the Opposition alliance. During their recent meeting with Assam leaders, the Congress left the question of alliance to the State-level leaders.

"The high command conveyed quite clearly that it will go by the suggestion of the Pradesh Congress Committee on the question of alliance and seat-sharing," Leader of the Opposition in Assam Debabrata Saikia said.

Left, liberals biggest danger to Hindus, says Himanta

Press Trust of India
KOLKATA

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday alleged that the Left and the liberals were the biggest danger to Hindus.

Maintaining that Muslims or Christians were never a threat to the Hindus, the Chief Minister claimed that those weakening the Hindus were within their own society.

"I believe that the Left and the liberals are the biggest danger to the Hindus," Mr. Sarma said while addressing an award ceremony conducted by a private organisation here.

India was a "naturally secular nation" and no one needs to teach it the qualities of tolerance and brotherhood, he said.

"If Rahul Gandhi or Mamata Banerjee thinks that Hindus will cease to exist, they should know that the Hindus will always remain," he added.

SFI seeks arrest and resignation of Minister, calls for university strike across West Bengal today

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The face-off between State Education Minister Bratya Basu and supporters of the Student Federation of India (SFI) at Jadavpur University on Saturday triggered a full-blown political row on Sunday, with the SFI taking out processions in different districts, demanding the resignation and arrest of the Minister.

The SFI, the student wing of the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), has called for a student strike across all universities on Monday, when the Class 12 State Board examination of the West Bengal Board of Secondary Examination commences.

Heated moment: SFI members surrounding the car of West Bengal Minister Bratya Basu at Jadavpur University on Saturday. ANI

The Kolkata Police on Sunday filed seven first information reports (FIRs), including two *suo motu* ones, and arrested an alumnus for the vandalisation of the university.

Kolkata Police Commissioner Manoj Kumar Verma said that parties should ensure examinees were not inconvenienced. "If the students face any problem, lawful action will be taken," Mr. Verma said.

More than four lakh students will be appearing for the Class 12 State Board examination.

Meanwhile, the SFI organised protests across the State against the State Education Minister, whose vehicle ran over protesting students at Jadavpur University on Saturday. The vehicle of the Minister was surrounded by students demanding that student elections be held in the university.

CPI(M)'s stand

CPI(M) State secretary Mohammad Salim joined a procession of SFI students at the Sulekha crossing and compared the incident with that at Lakhimpur Kheri, where the vehicle of the son of a Union Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party leader had run over protesting farmers.

Mr. Salim questioned why union elections were not held in the university.

SFI State secretary Debanjan Dey held a press conference and said that the Minister, and not students, was responsible for Saturday's hooliganism. "He tried to crush a protesting student under his car," Mr. Dey said.

During the day, the SFI's supporters took out processions in different parts of the city, including Jadavpur to Golpark. At several places, SFI activists were caught in heated arguments with the police, who objected to road blockades. The students who were injured in the scuffle are undergoing treatment. One of the injured students is said to be the son of a Trinamool Congress leader.

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Only Through KPP Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders in Two Cover System from Eligible contractors for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (Project), 3rd Floor Cauvery Bhavana, KG Road, Bengaluru- 560 009.

Sl No.	Name of the Works	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount
IFT No:BWSSB/CE(P)/ ACE(Cstr&DCW)/2326/2024-25		Date: 01.03.2025
1.	Procurement of 8nos of BS-VI Chassis of Gross vehicle weight (GVW) not less than 11 Ton suitable to mount 6000litres capacity Combination Machines (Suction Cum-Jetting to carry 4000litres of Water & 2000litres of Sewage)	₹ 1,71,84,000/- / ₹ 2,58,000/-
IFT No:BWSSB/CE(P)/ ACE(Cstr&DCW)/2327/2024-25		Date: 01.03.2025
2.	Procurement of 7nos of Suction Cum Jetting Machines of 8000 Litres capacity (to carry 6000litres of Water & 2000litres of Sewage) to be mounted on suitable BS-VI chassis provided by board including equipment maintenance of 1 year warranty period + 5 years.	₹ 4,72,50,000/- / ₹ 7,09,000/-
IFT No:BWSSB/CE(P)/ ACE(Cstr&DCW)/2328/2024-25		Date: 01.03.2025
3.	Procurement of 7nos of BS-VI Chassis of Gross vehicle weight (GVW) not less than 16 Ton suitable to mount 8000litres capacity Combination Machines (Suction Cum-Jetting to carry 6000litres of Water & 2000litres of Sewage)	₹ 1,75,08,141/- / ₹ 2,63,000/-

For the all above works the last date and time for Receipt of completed tenders will be on **13.03.2025** before **16:00** hrs. The Technical Bids will be opened on **14.03.2025** at **17:00** hrs.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Project)

The details regarding participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/SI/5400/2024/25

INBRIEF

Tejashwi seeks monthly aid for women in Bihar Budget

A day before the Budget to be presented by the Nitish Kumar government on Monday, Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly Tejashwi Yadav demanded that the State give women ₹2,500 per month for "economic justice". He also sought an increase in old age, disability and widow pension from ₹400 to ₹1,500, supply of gas cylinders for ₹500, and and 200 units of free electricity for all people.

Piyush Goyal's U.S. visit for trade talks to start today

With India and the U.S. gearing up to start negotiations for a proposed trade agreement, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal's Washington visit will begin on Monday, according to an official. Mr. Goyal is likely to hold talks with U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer and U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, the official said. India and the U.S. had announced their commitment to more than double the two-way commerce to $500 billion by 2030. PTI

'India should not support Afghanistan men's cricket team at the cost of women who are facing bans by the Taliban'

Suhasini Haidar
MADRID/DELHI

Even as the Afghan men's cricket team wins accolades for its performance in the ICC Champions Trophy in Pakistan, 22-year-old Olympic athlete Marzieh Hamidi faces death threats for calling for a boycott against the team.

Ms. Hamidi, who fled from Afghanistan in 2021 after the Taliban regime took over, says the ICC must enforce its rule against recognising cricketing countries that don't have both men's and women's teams. In addition, she says that teams promoted by the Taliban should be boycotted, as South African teams once were, given that the Taliban regime practices "gender apartheid", banning women and girls from education, sports, and all outdoor activities.

She spoke to *The Hindu* on the sidelines of the Herat Security Dialogue in Madrid, where she gave a speech about her campaign called "Let Us Exist". Ms. Hamidi, a taekwondo champion who was Afghanistan's flag-bearer at the Tokyo Olympics in 2020, now lives under police protection in France.

"When I spoke out against the Afghan cricket team, their fans first attacked me on social media," she said, describing how within days she received more than 5,000 phone calls and messages with death threats and rape threats after she was 'doxxed' (had all her personal information leaked over the Internet) in September 2024.

"All I said was that the Taliban are not recognised, and that the team must not be allowed to normalise them by competing in international sport," Ms. Hamidi said.

In Pakistan, where his team won a thrilling match against England on February 26, Afghanistan captain Hashmatullah Shahidi said he supported the women's team's right to play, but the situation was beyond their control.

Facing threat: Olympic athlete Marzieh Hamidi fled from Afghanistan in 2021 after the Taliban took over. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"We are sportspersons. We control what we can do inside the ground, and we can't worry about what's happening out of the ground," Mr. Shahidi told *The Hindu*. "Everyone likes to see everyone play. When it comes to politics and those things which we cannot control, we are only cricket players, we can control things on the ground," he added.

Though the English and Australian teams played matches with Mr. Shahidi's team at the ICC tournament, their Boards have called on the ICC to review its recognition of the team. In 2024, Cricket Australia cancelled a T20 series against Afghanistan, citing a "deteriorating human rights situation for women and girls".

In January this year, after 160 British MPs signed a petition calling for their team to boycott the game on February 26, U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer said that the ICC "should clearly deliver on their own rules and make sure that they (the Afghanistan Cricket Board) are supporting women's cricket as the England Cricket Board does".

Several Boards have also suggested that the ICC consider recognising the 2020 Afghan women's team, who are now refugees and reunited in Melbourne for a match on January 30 this year.

ICC president Jay Shah, however, overruled the objections. In statements to Reuters and the BBC, Mr. Shah said the ICC was "reviewing certain communications concerning Afghanistan women's cricket and exploring how they can be supported within ICC's legal and constitutional framework", and would continue to engage the Afghanistan Cricket Board on the issue.

The decision was a disappointment, said Ms. Hamidi, who is now training for the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028, but is uncertain about the future, given the threats over her boycott calls. She said India had a particular responsibility to ensure justice for women in sports in Afghanistan, given the role played by India in training the Afghan team from its start in 2001.

"It was wonderful that India helped build the team of its neighbour, of Afghanistan. But supporting it today comes at a cost – they [the Afghan cricketers] are normalising a group of terrorists. It isn't just gender apartheid that is a problem in Afghanistan; the treatment of all Afghans by the Taliban is a problem," she said.

Asked how she focuses on her training, Ms. Hamidi said she has learnt to roll with the punches. Born to an Afghan refugee family living in Iran in 2002, she moved between Iran and Afghanistan throughout her childhood.

In 2020, she moved back to Kabul and pursued her taekwondo skills, representing her country at international championships until the Taliban took control of Afghanistan in August 2021.

(*With inputs from Shayan Acharya, Lahore*)

'Jobs rising but salaries not keeping pace with inflation'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

NITI Aayog member pegs lack of skills as main reason, calls for focus on developing skills at all levels

NITI Aayog member Arvind Virmani has said that while employment is increasing in India, real wages for regular jobs have not kept pace with inflation over the past seven years.

India has an opportunity in terms of the global population, and there is a need to take advantage of it; for this, improving the quality of teaching and training is important, he noted.

"According to PLFS (Periodic Labour Force Survey) data, the worker-population ratio has been clearly increasing in the last seven years. This means that the number of jobs is increasing more than the population growth. There are fluctuations in this too but the trend shows that jobs are increasing. Therefore, it is wrong to say that jobs are not increasing," Mr. Virmani said in an interview with PTI-Bhasha.

According to the PLFS Annual Report 2023-24 (July-June), the worker-population ratio in terms of persons of all ages increased to 43.7% in 2023-24 from 34.7% in 2017-18.

"But a bigger issue is in the case of regular salaried jobs. In this category, real wages have not increased in line with inflation in seven years," the economist said. "As far as my assessment is concerned, the main reason for wages not increasing as per inflation is the lack of skills. We are not hiring skilled [workers]. I have seen the data of many countries... based on that, I would say that we need to work on this [skilling]. It is in a very weak state. The Central government is taking steps. States also need to work in this direction. Work needs to be done at the district level because jobs will be created there. This is important because when skills increase, productivity increases and real wages increase."

EPFO claims huge liability in disbursing higher pension

Pensioners' rights activists and trade union representatives on its Board question EPFO's stand on the issue, say the organisation is only highlighting 'inflated liability to create a wrong hype'

A.M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

The Employees Provident Fund Organisation fears that it may have to spend ₹1,86,920 crore to pay higher pension to just 50% of the applicants.

In a note circulated to its Central Board of Trustees (CBT) at a recent meeting, the EPFO provided an actuarial analysis of the current situation, which was termed incomplete by the workers' representatives. They have asked it to present a detailed picture of the situation.

The EPFO, in the note, told the CBT that a detailed study can be completed only after all the higher pension applications are finally processed. It said interim actuarial evaluations will continue for every 50,000 demand letters issued to the Employees Pension Scheme subscribers who had submitted joint options with their employers. "Evaluation of sample data of around 38,000 applicants for pension on higher wages shows deficit of around ₹9,500 crore i.e., approximately ₹25 lakh per person. An initial estimate suggested that approximately a sum of ₹1,86,920 crore will be depleted out of the fund on settlement of even as less as 50% of the joint options (post 2014 cases)," the EPFO told the CBT members in the note.

Social security: The EPFO has about 7.71 crore members contributing to the provident fund and pension scheme. FILE PHOTO

It added that with the closure of receipt of fresh applications on January 31, a more precise estimate of probable liabilities will be obtained soon. The EPFO received about 17.49 lakh applications for higher pension. Of this, as on February 14, 2.24 lakh applications were not forwarded by the employers to the EPFO, while 3.92 lakh applications were referred back to employers for complete information. The EPFO was examining 1.92 lakh applications at present and 2,19,155 demand letters had been issued to the applicants for payment of additional amount for the higher wages. Also, 74,811 pensioners have deposited the additional amount sought by the EPFO and 41,285 members who are still on service have also deposited the higher amount. Around 5.05 lakh applications have been rejected.

Pensioners' rights activists and trade unions questioned the EPFO's stand. "Supreme Court verdict is the law of the land. Higher pension will have to be given to those subscribers of the EPS [Employees' Pension Scheme] who had been contributing 10% to 12% on their actual wages and paid the differential amount between 8.33% of actual wages and 8.33% on ceiling wages. The EPFO is highlighting the inflated liability just to create wrong hype based on different hypothetical yardsticks by taking shelter of actuary," said pensioners' rights activist Parveen Kohli. CBT member and CITU leader R. Karumalaiyan said the EPFO should publish how much additional amount it had collected from workers who have submitted joint options.

Renowned artist Himmat Shah dies of heart attack at 92

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

HIMMAT SHAH (1933 - 2025)

Renowned artist and sculptor Himmat Shah died at Jaipur's Shalby Hospital after a heart attack on Sunday, his close friend Himanshu Jangid told *PTI*. Mr. Shah was 92.

"Although he was not feeling well for the last one week, he was actively working in his studio. On Monday, he had a heart attack following which he passed away," Mr. Jangid said.

He is survived by two sisters, who will take part in his last rites on Monday in Jaipur.

Born in Gujarat's Lothal in 1933, Mr. Shah was inadvertently introduced to terracotta art and other objects from the Indus Valley Civilisation.

He was later sent to Gharshala, a school affiliated to Dakshinamurty, where he studied under artist-educator Jagubhai Shah before joining the J.J. School of Art in Bombay, and moving on to Baroda on a government scholarship from 1956 to 1960.

In Baroda, he was influenced by N.S. Bendre and K.G. Subramanyan. Later in 1967, he received a French government scholarship to study etching under S.W. Hayeter and Krishna Reddy at Atelier 17, Paris.

Mr. Shah shared his days at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Baroda with one of his contemporaries and renowned painter Gulammohammed Sheikh.

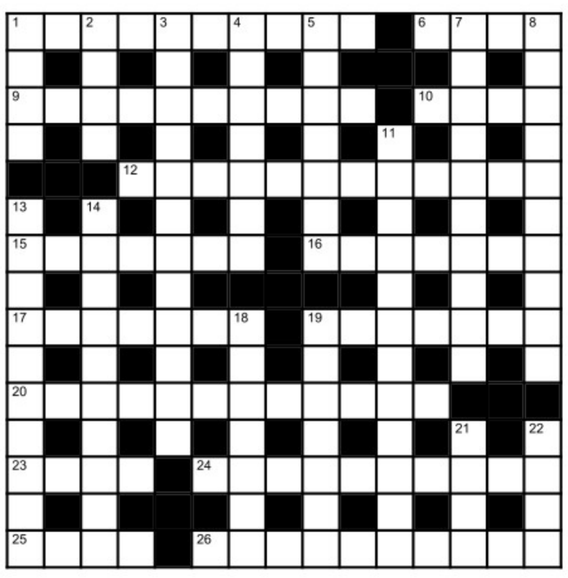
Remembering Mr. Shah as an "ebullient and jovial" person, Mr. Sheikh said he developed a "highly individualised approach" to sculpture, "...changing the idea of making a human head in multiple ways with ingenious dexterity and creative spirit".

TH CROSSWORD + 14422

(set by Bruno)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Isolation of person and family trapped in liberal societies (10)
6 One's inclined to bring people up (4)
9 Downloads a bad smelly specimen (10)
10 Open, switch hands, and run (4)
12 Suspect witness aims to get sweetheart arrested - they need to be separated right away! (7,5)
15 Husband and girl (French one) with a weapon (7)
16 Time wasted in depression almost always more difficult (7)
17 Dance record followed by one hundred thousand (7)
19 Novice gridmaker cycles those in white squares (7)
20 Slower than the best... it's secret? (3,3,6)
23 Unacceptable to return, after hemming, posh coat (4)
24 Turn child on bed - else turning can result in haemorrhages (10)
25 Residual force yanks top off (4)
26 Belatedly sad - after son's time of expiry (4-2,4)

Down

1 Green and red, not blue (4)
2 Time of day devoid of love and energy - not a bit (4)
3 Famous person - angel - hid guilt somehow, not for all to see (7,5)
4 Southern people follow contemporary TV personalities (7)
5 Finance partners joining trail (7)
7 Politician finally boards a large boat for an extended period of work (3-7)
8 Force media Union to resist (10)
11 Beginning to crumble, when surrounded by support, you finally fight back systematically (12)
13 Fast food owner's on vacation - daughter's quicker to cover (5-5)
14 Crawling, falls on our ground (2,3,5)
18 Amateur artist with nothing, captured by kings, gets threats essentially, provides entertainment (7)
19 Milky yoghurt initially spurned by prowling alleycat (7)
21 Fluid from ears, oozing (4)
22 One surrounded by water often dissolves (4)

SUDOKU

3				2		1		
	4			9		2		7
					1			
	6	2	3	8		5		
	5						1	
		4		5	2	6	3	
			7					
4		6		3			7	
		8		4				9

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

No.SS6447 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

G	W	B			S	C	M	
M	U	S	H	R	O	O	M	
R	I	T	U	A	A	T		
B	U	M	P	T	A	S	K	M
G			L	I	P	S	O	
A	R	A	B	L	E	C	R	O
A	O			A	O	F		
M	I	X	E	D	B	L	E	S
	L	A	C			E	E	
F	L	O	U	R	I	S	H	O
U	N	Q	A	R		T		
U	N	O	C	C	U	P	I	E
G	H	I	R	E	O	R		
L	I	N	E	A	R	S	T	R
S	S	I			S	E	S	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	9	6	4	1	5	8	7	2
8	7	1	2	6	9	5	4	3
2	4	5	7	8	3	6	1	9
1	3	4	9	5	6	2	8	7
9	6	2	8	4	7	1	3	5
5	8	7	3	2	1	4	9	6
6	5	9	1	7	4	3	2	8
7	1	8	5	3	2	9	6	4
4	2	3	6	9	8	7	5	1

FAITH

Inseparability from Goddess

Every person has certain attributes which are always a part of him. He can be identified by these attributes. You cannot identify a person by, say, his spectacles. He might take them off when someone goes to meet him. So, you cannot give this as his identifying feature. But his height, for instance, can be cited as an inseparable quality. Such a quality is called *apratuk siddha viseshanam*. Such a unique characteristic that Lord Narayana possesses is His inseparability from Goddess Mahalakshmi, elaborated M.A. Venkatakrishnan in a discourse. And the Goddess' distinguishing quality is Her inseparability from Him. This becomes evident in the Sita-Rama union.

When Janaka gives his daughter Sita in marriage to Rama, he says, "This is my daughter Sita. She will be Your partner when You carry out Your dharma." What this means is that when Rama decides to do something, She will be a loyal partner, helping Him accomplish whatever He sets out to do. How important Sita is in Rama's life is seen in the way Valmiki hastens to describe the Sita-Rama wedding. Verses eight to eleven of the 18th sarga of Bala Kanda talk of the birth of Rama. Valmiki does not tell us anything about the childhood of Rama. We are told that the sons of Dasaratha studied, and also were experts in archery. In sloka 39, Dasaratha is discussing possible matrimonial alliances when Viswamitra arrives. So, the entire story from Rama's birth to the arrival of Viswamitra is covered in about 30 verses, because Valmiki wants to take the reader to the most important event in the Ramayana, namely the marriage of the Divine Couple. This shows the significance of Sita-Rama marriage in the entire *itihasa*.

Testing times: Stronger U.S. dollar led to a cool-off in metal prices. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Gold, silver lack lustre

PRECIOUSMETALS

B. Krishnakumar

Precious metals continued to move higher in February with Comex gold scaling past the psychological $2,900 mark. Gold prices marched into uncharted territory driven by the economic uncertainty triggered by U.S. import tariff plans.

The price of Comex silver, however, did not share the same enthusiasm and is yet to cross its life-time highs.

Under dollar's shadow

However, the strengthening of the U.S. dollar led to a cool-off in precious metals prices in the past few days.

After touching a new life-time high of $2,974 a few days ago, Comex gold cooled off recently and settled at $2,848.5 an ounce by the end of February, representing a modest gain of 0.48%. Comex silver closed 2.38% lower at $31.49 an ounce by the end of February.

Better local trends

The performance of precious metals in the domestic market was relatively better, helped by the sustained weakness in the value of Indian rupee.

MCX gold gained 2.42% to settle at ₹84,219 per 10-grams at the end of February. MCX silver closed 0.91% lower at ₹94,328 per kilogram.

Comex gold price turned a bit weak in the past few days and this weakness is likely to persist in the short-term. After this anticipated cool-off, the price is expected to resume its long-term uptrend.

Next target

As highlighted in the recent updates, the next major target for Comex gold is $3,050-$3,100. The positive outlook for gold would be under threat only if the price closes below $2,740-$2,760 range.

Comex silver continues to be a relative under performer in comparison to gold.

The short-term outlook is not too positive for silver and the price could drop between $29.8 and $30.5. A move above $33.6 would indicate the resumption of the long-term uptrend. Until this breakout happens, expect silver price to either remain range bound or drift to lower levels.

Mirroring the sentiment in the global markets, the MCX gold price, too, managed to hit record highs a few days ago. The price has however been consolidating in a range in the past three days. A breakout above ₹86,800 would impart momentum to the uptrend and help gold price reach the next target of ₹88,500-₹89,500 range.

Until this breakout happens, expect domestic gold price to remain subdued. The immediate support cum target zone for MCX gold is ₹80,900-₹81,500.

MCX silver price too ruled firm in the first half of February and the price also hit the target zone of ₹1,00,500-₹1,05,500 mentioned last month. The short-term outlook for silver is negative and the price could drift lower to ₹89,500-₹90,500 zone. Expect weakness to persist unless the price moves above ₹97,500.

To summarise, the precious metal price is likely to remain subdued in the short-term. The long-term trend still remains positive.

(The author is a Chennai-based analyst/trader. The views and opinion featured in this column are based on the analysis of short-term price movements in gold and silver futures at COMEX & Multi Commodity Exchange of India. This is not meant to be a trading or investment advice.)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

ILLUSTRATION: SAAI

Your household budget: aspects to take note of

Though households have been doing it for ages, certain aspects tend to get overlooked; periodic assessment of net worth, contingency planning and monitoring debt servicing ratio are vital

MAINTAINING VIGIL

Joydeep Sen

There is focus on and attention around the Union Budget. While it is relevant, what impacts you more is your own budget. It is useful to have a discussion around your household budget – it may point to details you might be missing.

It starts with the heads of income. Receipts from various sources have to be listed and this becomes total income. On the expense side, there are some amounts that have to be compulsorily spent, called mandatory expenses. Loan equated monthly expenses (EMIs) and provident fund contributions are examples of such expenses.

Others are necessary for daily life. Finally comes the discretionary expenses– ones not essential to daily living and can be cut in case there is need for a control on total amount spent. Total expenses, when reduced from total income, gives the savings.

The income of a household or individual has to be adequate to meet current expenses as well as provide savings to create assets that will help meet future expenses. If the current expenses are controlled, then it contributes to securing the financial future of the household. Judicious financial management requires a defined level of savings should be targeted to meet future financial goals. A budget helps a household plan its income and expenses so that the income available is utilised in an optimum manner to meet current and future needs. Once incomes and expenses are identified, it will be easy to assess where the problem lies, if the savings are inadequate.

> If there is an area where the budget target is consistently missed, then the planning by the individual/household is off track and that needs to be quickly corrected

Focus should be on managing expenses to enhance savings.

Monitoring budget

Recording actual income and expenses shows the real situation and has a vital role to play in financial decision making. The actual figures compared with the budget plan will give an idea of how robust the budget planning was.

Monitoring of the budget has to be done continuously and after looking at the difference between budget and actual, action needs to be taken in the form of correcting the budget figures going ahead.

If there is an area where there is a constant missing of the budget target then the planning is off track and that needs to be corrected. For example, if there is a provision of ₹5,000 a month for conveyance and average conveyance expense comes to say ₹8,000 for consecutive months, then it is either the budget figure that has to be changed or the individual has to change the mode of conveyance to reduce cost.

> The amount of savings consistently achieved has to be seen in light of future financial goals. A target may be set for raising savings rate by a specified percentage

The amount of savings consistently achieved has to be seen in light of future financial goals. For example, a family saving ₹20,000 a month may require savings of ₹40,000 per month to match future goals. A target of raising savings rate by a specified percentage might be set.

Personal balance sheet

Preparing a personal balance sheet and net-worth computation gives a perspective on where you stand. A balance sheet shows the financial position of the individual or household in the form of assets and liabilities on a particular date.

Assessment of the financial well-being of a household/individual can be made by calculating the net worth which is assets minus liabilities.

Higher the number, better is the financial position. Net worth should be calculated periodically.

Contingency planning is another important aspect. Contingencies could be sudden medical expenses or if something were to happen to the only earning member of the family. Separation (divorce) is another risk that families face. An emergency fund needs to be the first goal towards which a household or individual should save, as a protection against the possibility of loss or reduction of income. The fund should be adequate to meet the expenses for say six months, in the event the regular income is not available. Insurance is important but also important to note for protection, you need term insurance.

To conclude, savings ratio is the percentage of income an individual/household is able to save. If your income is ₹100 and you are saving ₹20, your savings ratio is 20%.

Obviously, the higher the better. There is a counter argument as well, that you need to enjoy your present and not just save for future. There is another relevant ratio here, that is debt servicing ratio.

If your net-of-tax income is ₹100 and you spend ₹40 in servicing EMIs, then debt-service ratio is 40%. You have to strike a balance between being prudent and managing a savings ratio of 20 to 40% or enjoying your present well and getting into a debt trap of EMIs later.

(Joydeep Sen is a corporate trainer on financial markets and an author.)

Creating 2 portfolios is crucial

THINKINVESTOR

It is optimal for an investor to create core as well as satellite portfolios, accumulating wealth for life goals while taking advantage of short term gains from fluctuations occurring in the market

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

There are two aspects to investing – the objective to accumulate wealth to achieve life goals and to generate short-term gains riding the market fluctuations. The first objective is achieved by creating goal-based portfolios, also called core portfolios. The second can be achieved by creating a trading portfolio or the satellite portfolio. Here, we discuss why you should simultaneously consider creating both portfolios. We also discuss the optimal investment allocation to both portfolios.

Moderating biases

Suppose you invest only to achieve life goals. You observe the stock market shows high volatility, frequently moving up sharply only to dip later. Your extended family and friends generate handsome gains trading in the market. You are, however, contended 'investing for the long term'. After a while you are likely to regret not having traded like your extended family and friends to earn short-term gains.

Now, consider an alternative route. Here, you aggressively trade in the market, trying to capture short-term market fluctuations. You are bound to have share of losses. If your market timing is not consistently good, you could lose a significant part of your capital. In this world, you may regret not building wealth for the long term.

When you create only core portfolios, you are said to suffer from a behavioural bias called hyperopia.

That is, you are concerned about the long-term wealth at the expense of short-term returns. When you create only a satellite portfolio, you are said to suffer from myopia; your concern is short-term returns at the expense of building long-term wealth. It is optimal to create both portfolios. That way, you can moderate hyperopia and myopia. This is especially true when markets are volatile as is the case now.

Conclusion

Some individuals prefer to concentrate on the long term while others like to trade aggressively to capture short-term gains. So, the allocation preference for the two portfolios may vary across individuals. That said, an optimal split would be 70% core, 30% satellite, with a leeway of five percentage points. So, not more than 35% of your total investments in a year should be in satellite portfolio, with 30% being optimal. If you generate significant gains in satellite portfolio, you can move some of the gains to your core portfolios. It is, however, not optimal to move money from core to the satellite portfolio.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Personal Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
HDFC Bank	10.85-24.00	10,834-14,384	2,167-2,877	Up to Rs 6,500
Tata Capital	11.99 onwards	11,120 onwards	2,224 onwards	Up to 4%
State Bank of India	11.45-14.85	10,984-11,856	2,197-2,371	Up to 1.50% (Max. Rs 15,000)
ICICI Bank	10.85-16.65	10,834-12,332	2,167-2,466	Up to 2%
Bank of Baroda	11.05-18.50	10,884-12,833	2,177-2,567	Up to 2% (Maximum Rs 10,000)
Axis Bank	11.10-22.00	10,896-13,809	2,179-2,762	Up to 2%
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.99-16.99	10,869-12,424	2,174-2,485	Up to 5%
Bank of India	11.60-16.20	11,021-12,212	2,204-2,442	Up to 1% (Minimum Rs 250 and Maximum Rs 15,000)
Canara Bank	10.70-16.15	10,797-12,199	2,159-2,440	Up to 0.50% (Maximum Rs 2,500)
Punjab National Bank	11.15-17.70	10,909-12,615	2,182-2,523	Up to 1%
HSBC Bank	10.15-16.00	10,660-12,159	2,132-2,432	Up to 2%
Federal Bank	11.49 onwards	10,994 onwards	2,199 onwards	Up to 3%
Union Bank of India	11.10-15.20	10,896-11,948	2,179-2,390	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 7,500)
Bajaj Finserv	10.00-31.00	10,624-16,485	2,125-3,297	Up to 3.93%
Punjab & Sind Bank	11.10-13.85	10,896-11,595	2,179-2,319	0.50%-1%
South Indian Bank	12.85-20.60	11,338-13,414	2,268-2,683	Up to 2%
UCO Bank	10.95-13.95	11,236-11,621	2,172-2,324	Up to 1% (Minimum Rs 750)
IDFC First Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	2%
Bank of Maharashtra	9.75-14.55	10,562-11,777	2,112-2,355	1% (Max. Rs 10,000)
Karnataka Bank	13.72	11,562	2,312	Up to 2% (Min. Rs 2,500; Max. Rs 8,500)
IndusInd Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 3.5%

Car Loans

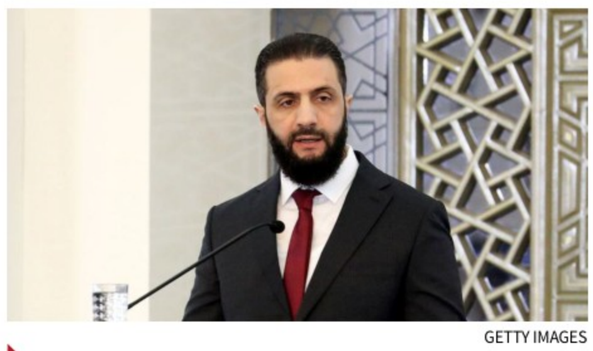
Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
Union Bank of India	8.45-10.20	10,246 - 10,673	Up to Rs 1,000
Punjab National Bank	8.50-10.60	10,258 - 10,772	Up to 0.25% (Rs.1,000 - Rs.1,500)
Bank of Baroda	8.90-12.45	10,355 - 11,236	Up to Rs 750
State Bank of India	9.10-10.15	10,403-10,660	NIL
Bank of Maharashtra*	8.45-12.75	10,246 - 11,313	0.25% of loan amount (max. up to Rs. 15,000)
Indian Overseas Bank**	8.40 - 12.00	10,234 - 11,122	0.50% (Rs 500 - Rs 5,000)
ICICI Bank	9.10 onwards	10,403 onwards	Up to 2%
HDFC Bank	9.20 onwards	10,428 onwards	Up to 1% (Rs 3,500 - Rs 9,000)
Karnataka Bank	9.17-11.65	10,420 - 11,034	Up to 0.60% (Rs 2500 - Rs 11,000)
Federal Bank	8.6 onwards	10,282 onwards	Rs 2,000 - Rs 4,500
Punjab and Sind Bank***	8.70-10.10	10,307 - 10,648	0.25% (Rs 1,000-Rs 15,000)
South Indian Bank	8.75 onwards	10,319 onwards	Rs. 1999
IDFC First Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	Up to Rs 10,000
City Union Bank	14.45-14.95	11,751-11,882	1.25% (Min: Rs 750)

*0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holders.
**0.50% interest rate concession to borrowers with credit scores of 800 and above. Interest rate concession of 0.25% to borrowers having credit scores of 750-799.
***Concession of up to 50% on processing fee for PSB Apna Vahan Sugam.

Rates and charges as on February 26 **Source: Paisabazaar.com**

DAMASCUS

Syria forms committee to draft transitional framework text



GETTY IMAGES

Syria's interim President Muhammad al-Jolani announced on Sunday the formation of a committee to draft a constitutional declaration for the country's transition after the overthrow of long-time ruler Bashar al-Assad. The presidency announced "the formation of a committee of experts", including one woman. AFP

TEHRAN

Iran lawmakers sack Finance Minister over economic woes

AFP

Iran's parliament sacked the country's finance minister on Sunday after impeaching him over soaring inflation and a plunging currency, state television reported. Economy and Finance Minister Abdolnaser Hemmati lost a vote of confidence, with 182 of 273 parliamentarians present backing his removal. AFP

SEOUL

U.S. aircraft carrier arrives in South Korea after North test-fires missiles

AP

A U.S. aircraft carrier arrived in South Korea on Sunday in a show of force, days after North Korea test-launched cruise missiles. The arrival of the *USS Carl Vinson* and its strike group at the South Korean port of Busan was meant to display a solid U.S-South Korean military alliance in the face of North Korean threats. AP

MOSCOW

Pro-Russian candidate Gunba declared winner in Abkhazia vote

AP

Pro-Russian politician Badra Gunba was declared winner of run-off presidential polls in the breakaway Georgian region of Abkhazia, amid tensions over Moscow's influence. Abkhazia is recognised by most of the world as Georgian territory, but has been under Russian control since a 2008 war between Moscow and Tbilisi. AFP

Israel cuts off Gaza aid to pressure Hamas to accept new ceasefire deal

Egypt accuses Israel of using starvation as a weapon while Hamas calls the move 'cheap extortion, a war crime and a blatant attack' on the truce; Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu says that under the existing agreements Israel could resume fighting

Associated Press
TEL AVIV

Israel stopped the entry of all goods and supplies into the Gaza Strip on Sunday and warned of "additional consequences" if Hamas does not accept a new proposal to extend a fragile ceasefire, while key mediator Egypt accused Israel of using "starvation as a weapon".

Hamas accused Israel of trying to derail the ceasefire agreement hours after its first phase ended. It called the decision to cut off aid "cheap extortion, a war crime and a blatant attack" on the truce, which took hold in January after over a year of negotiations. Both sides stopped short of saying the ceasefire had ended.

Ray of hope: A woman prepares food for the iftar, or fast-breaking meal, in a shelter in Jabalia on Saturday. AFP

The first phase, which included a surge in humanitarian assistance after months of growing hunger in the territory, expired on Saturday. The two sides have yet to negotiate the second phase, in which Hamas was to release dozens of remaining hostages in return for an Israeli pullout from Gaza and a lasting ceasefire.

Israel described the new proposal as a U.S. one. There was no immediate comment from the United States, and it was not clear when U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff, expected to visit the region last week, would arrive.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that under the existing agreements Israel could resume fighting after the first phase if it believes negotiations are ineffective. He said the ceasefire would only continue if Hamas keeps releasing hostages, telling his Cabinet "there will be no free lunches." He said Israel was "full coordinated" with President Donald Trump's administration.

Four killed, six wounded in Israeli attacks

Officials in Gaza said four persons were killed and six injured in Israeli attacks on Sunday after the first phase of a fragile truce drew to a close. "Since this morning, four dead and six wounded" have been brought to "hospitals following Israeli attacks in various parts of the territory", they said. AFP

Russia praises Trump, blames Europe for prolonging war

Reuters
MOSCOW

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Sunday praised U.S. President Donald Trump's "common sense" aim to end the war in Ukraine, but accused the European powers which have rallied around Kyiv of seeking to prolong the conflict.

Mr. Lavrov said the U.S. still wanted to be the world's most powerful country and that Washington and Moscow would never see eye to eye on everything, but that they had agreed to be pragmatic when interests coincided.

Sergei Lavrov

Quoting China ties

President Vladimir Putin's Foreign Minister of 21 years said the model of the U.S.-China relationship was the one that should be built between Russia and the United States to do a lot of "mutually beneficial things".

"Donald Trump is a pragmatist," Mr. Lavrov told the Russian military newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda*. "His slogan is common sense. It means, as everyone can see, a shift to a different way of doing things." "But the goal is still MAGA (Make America Great Again)," Mr. Lavrov said, referring to Mr. Trump's political slogan. "This gives a lively, human character to politics. That's why it's interesting to work with him."

Europe of 'tragedies'

Mr. Lavrov criticised Europe, saying that for the past 500 years Europe had been the crucible of "all the tragedies of the world" including colonisation, wars, crusaders, the Crimean War, Napoleon Bonaparte, World War One and Adolf Hitler.

Mr. Lavrov also dismissed European ideas for sending in a contingent of European peacekeepers and said Russia had no trust in Ukraine after the collapse of the Minsk agreements, which were designed to end a separatist war by Russian speakers in eastern Ukraine.

On the draw

Imran Khan seeks global help, lauds Trump

Press Trust of India
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan has appealed to the international community, particularly the U.S, to reaffirm its commitment to democracy, human rights, and regional stability.

Dawn reported that in an article in *Time* magazine, the incarcerated politician congratulated Mr. Trump on his "political comeback".

In a first, private U.S. spacecraft lands upright on lunar surface

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

A U.S. company successfully landed its spacecraft on the moon on Sunday, marking only the second private mission to achieve the milestone – and the first to do so upright.

Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost Mission 1 touched down shortly after 3.34 a.m. U.S. Eastern Time (0204 IST) near Mons Latreille, a volcanic formation in Mare Crisium on the moon's northeastern near side.

"Y'all stuck the landing, we're on the moon," an engineer at mission control in Austin, Texas, called out as the team erupted in cheers. CEO Jason Kim confirmed that the spacecraft was "stable and upright" – in contrast to the first private landing last February, which came down sideways.

"We're on the Moon!" Nicky Fox, associate administrator for NASA's Science Mission Directorate, rejoiced.

The mission is aimed at reducing costs and supporting Artemis, the programme designed to return astronauts to the moon. AP

The first image from the lander revealed the rocky, pockmarked terrain it had to autonomously navigate in order to select its touchdown spot, having slowed down from thousands of miles per hour to just two mph.

Nicknamed "Ghost Riders in the Sky," the mission is part of a NASA-industry partnership aimed at reducing costs and supporting Artemis, the programme designed to return astronauts to the moon.

Size of a hippopotamus

The golden lander, about the size of a hippopotamus, launched on January 15 on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket, capturing stunning footage of earth and the moon along its 2.8 million mile journey.

It shared a ride with a Japanese company's lander set to attempt a landing in May.

Blue Ghost carries 10 instruments, including a lunar soil analyser, a radiation-tolerant computer and an experiment testing the feasibility of using the existing global satellite navigation system to navigate the Moon.

Designed to operate for a full lunar day (14 Earth days), Blue Ghost is expected to capture high-definition imagery of a total eclipse on March 14, when Earth blocks the Sun from the Moon's horizon.

On March 16, it will record a lunar sunset, offering insights into how dust levitates above the surface under solar influence – creating the mysterious lunar horizon glow first documented by Apollo astronaut Eugene Cernan.

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
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Tq:B.Bagewadi Dt: Vijayapur. Phone:08426-281044.
No: KBJNL/ALBC-Dn/DM/Qutn/ALBC HW/2024-25/1767
Date: 27.02.2025

INFORMATION QUOTATION NOTIFICATION

On behalf of the Managing Director, KBJNL, Bangalore, the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, ALBC Division, Almatti the undersigned invites **sealed quotations** for competitive rates from Reputed Firm/Authorized Agencies for **"Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of New 1 x 12.50 MVA 110/6.6 KV step down Power Transformer with Buy Back System of Failed 12.50 MVA 110/6.6 KV of M/s NGEF make step down Power Transformer as is where is condition at Almatti Left Bank Canal, Almatti with maintenance for a period of five years".** The details and any further information can be had with the under signed office during office hours and can be obtained through e-mail, duly placing your request to **ee09albe@gmail.com** and Cell No.: **9035782142** on or before **10-03-2025**. Last date to receive information quotation is on or before **11-03-2025** at 5.00 PM. The sealed quotation will be opened on **12-03-2025** at 11.00 AM in the under signed office.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/737/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2024–25

Sd/- Executive Engineer, KBJNL, ALBC Division,Almatti

Government of Karnataka
Directorate of Child Rights Protection
Women and Child Development Department
District Child Protection Officer,
District Child Protection Unit
No. CA-15:17, First Floor, Anjanadri Main Road, Vijaya Nagara 4th Stage, 2nd Phase, Mysuru-32
Ph.No: 0821-2543003 Emai-ID: dcpumysore@gmail.com
No.DCPU/MYS/Manpower tender/call-2/2024-25
Date:28.02.2025

TENDER NOTIFICATION (CALL-2)

The tender Notification for tender 2024-25 (for One Year) has been invited as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements Act, 1999 and Rules 2000, for the Manpower Service to the District Child Protection Unit, Child Care Institution, and Child line of the Department of Women child development and District Child Protection Unit, Mysuru. The Tender document may be downloaded from e-Procurement and Website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from **03.03.2025** and the last date for submission of tender through e-Procurement with **EMD amount of Rs.1.92 Lakhs** is **18.03.2025** up to **5.00 p.m.** Those tenders which are not submitted with EMD will be rejected. Tender estimated amount is **1 Crore and 92.00 lakhs**. Opening the technical bid on **20.03.2025** on 11.00 a.m. and opening the financial bid on **26.03.2025** on 11.00 a.m. Further information may be obtained from District Child Protection Unit, Vijayanagara 4th stage, 2nd Phase, Mysore-570032. contact No:0821-2543003 or Website.If there are any changes. in date, it'll be updated on the e-portal. If the last date for submission of tender treated holiday, the next working day will be considered as last date. No further notification in this regard will be announced.

Sd/- District Child Protection Officer
DIPR/DDMYS/1376/KSMCA/998/2024-25

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT my client has entered into negotiations and intending to purchase the immovable agricultural land situated at Shetterhalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural from the prospective owners, the following prospective owners have represented to my client that they are the absolute owners and are in possession of the properties more particularly described in the Schedule hereunder:

Wherefore all person/ persons claiming or having any claim against or to the schedule properties or any part thereof by way of inheritance. Mortgage, sale, conveyance, MOU, agreement to sell, transfer, lease deed , tenancy, license, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned **within 15 days** from the date of publication hereof failing which my client shall proceed to register the sale deeds without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, will be considered as waived.

Sl. No.	Village	Name of Land Owners	Sy. No.	Extent
1	Shetterhalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural	**R.K Properties**	118/2	1 A 05.12 G
2			118/3	1 A 05.12 G
3			119/7	0Acre 23.12 G
4			111/3	0 A 21 G
5		**G. Rekha W/o Venugopal** R/o Ganigara Street, Ward No 6, Devanahalli Town and Taluk, Bengaluru Rural	110/1	0 A 33 G
6			110/3	1 Acre
7			110/4	1 Acre
8			110/7	0 A 10 G
9		**G V. Vivek** R/o Ganigara Street, Ward No 6, Devanahalli Town and Taluk, Bengaluru Rural	112/3	0 A 26 G
10			110/6	0A 20 G
11			115/3	0 A 21.12 G
12			115/7	0 A 21.12 G
13		**G N Venugopal** Son of Late Narayanswamy R/o Ganigara Street, Ward No 6, Devanahalli Town and Taluk, Bengaluru Rural	114/4	1A08.08G
14			111/1	0 A 22 G
15			111/7	0 A 22 G
16			111/8	0 A 22 G
17			111/9	0 A 21 G
18			117/4	0 A 20 G
19		**D.S Anitha** Wife of D M Mallikarjuna R/o Manju Nilla, Holalkere Road, Neelakanteshwara Street, Chitradurga	111/4	0 A 21 G

Dated this 01 day of March 2025.

AMBRISH B N , Advocate
4708, 7th Floor, High Point- IV, Palace Road, Bengaluru 560001
Email: ambbyr@gmail.com

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Pasumathi Lakshmi Sirisha W/O, Ramkumar Pasumathi R/o Sumukha Sai Suchin Apartment, Falt No : Ff3, 2nd Floor, Kanakpura Main Road, Raghuvanahalli, Landmark - Bata Showroom. Bengaluru, Pin - 560109. have changed my name to Sirisha Pasumarthi.

I KEERTHANA Nagaraj, W/o. Arnav Anil Bagalwadi, No.21, Nischint KHB Road, Hanumanthappa Layout, Sulthanpalya, R.T.Nagar Post, Bengaluru - 560032 have changed my name to Keerthana Arnav Bagalwadi vide Affidavit dated 04.01.2025 sworn before Notary K.V.Bachi Reddy, Bengaluru.

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I NETHRAVATHI M.K W/O, Shrinivas R/o 2-79/2 Farahatabad, Gulbarga 585308 have changed my name to Tejashwini Patil Sworn before Affidavit Anupama C.K date 26/02/2025

I, TAMBULE Sangameshwar Annarao S/o Annarao S Tambule R/o Flat No. S–2, Srivari Apartments, 5th Main, Netaji Road, Dwaraka Nagar, IAF Post, Yelahanka, Bangalore North–560063 have changed my name from Tambule Sangameshwar Annarao to Sangameshwar Annarao Tambule vide affidavit dated 28/02/2025 at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, JEROMEE IMMAGRET MARY, W/o Sunil Peter, R/at #401, Assurance, 8th A Main, Kalyan Nagar 1st Block, HRBR Layout, Banaswadi, Bangalore-560 043 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **JEROMEE IMMAGRET MARY JOHN** to **JEROMEE IMMAGRET MARY,** henceforth I shall be known and called as **JEROMEE IMMAGRET MARY** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 1st March 2025, sworn before Advocate and Notary **Y.R. CHANDRASHEKAR** at Bangalore.

HIS OWN

Shreyas goes past Kohli for most fifty-plus scores at No. 4 in ODIs

PTI

India batter Shreyas Iyer continued his fine run in ODIs, overtaking Virat Kohli and drawing level with Brian Lara in the all-time list for most fifty-plus scores at the No. 4 spot. Shreyas' 79 against the Kiwis on Sunday in the Champions Trophy was his 16th fifty-plus score in 39 innings at the crucial batting position.

UP THERE

Kohli becomes seventh cricketer to represent India in 300 or more ODIs

REUTERS

Star batter Virat Kohli took the field for his 300th ODI as New Zealand won the toss and opted to bowl against India in the final Group A clash at the 2025 Champions Trophy. Kohli became only the seventh cricketer to represent India in 300 or more ODIs. Sachin Tendulkar leads the way with 463 ODIs – the most by any player in world cricket.

TOP-CLASS ATTACK

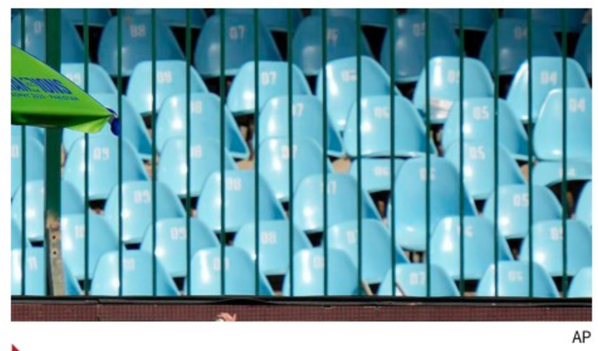
Variety makes South Africa's pace trio a dominant unit: Kumble

REUTERS

Former India spinner and head coach Anil Kumble believes the variety offered by South Africa's pace trio, featuring Marco Jansen, Kagiso Rabada, and Lungi Ngidi, make it a dominant force even in the non-friendly bowling conditions. "Even on a flat track, it's not easy for the batters to line up because all three are very different," he said.

LOW TURNOUT

Pakistan fans lose interest in CT after the team's early exit



AP

Pakistani cricket fans have more or less lost interest in the ICC Champions Trophy after the early exit of their team from the competition and the onset of Ramadan. On Saturday, there were hardly a few thousand people at the National Stadium for the England-South Africa match.

Varun bamboozles Kiwi batters as India tops group

Shreyas' 79 and fine knocks by Axar and Hardik lift the team to 249 for nine before the spinners take centrestage; Williamson wages a lone battle; Men in Blue to take on Australia in the first semifinal

CHAMPIONS TROPHY

S. Dipak Ragav
DUBAI

Sensational stuff: Varun claimed a five-for in just his second ODI, with Young being his first victim. PTI & GETTY IMAGES

Varun Chakaravarthy's previous international appearances at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium were forgettable as he went wicketless in the three games he played during the 2021 T20 World Cup.

On Sunday against New Zealand, he did not get off on the right note either on his Champions Trophy debut, dropping a sitter off a Free Hit at mid-on in the fourth over of the chase.

However, the Varun of 2025 is a far more savvy cricketer than he was four years ago and produced a mesmerising spell (10-0-42-5) to help the Men in Blue finish on top of Group-A with a convincing 44-run win in the tournament's final league match.

The victory means India will take on Australia in the first semifinal here on Tuesday.

Defending a total of 249, the Tamil Nadu spinner, who replaced Harshit Rana in the playing XI, spun a web around the Kiwi batters and justified his late inclusion in the squad.

Earlier, riding on Shreyas Iyer's fine 79 and a late cameo from Hardik Pandya (45), India managed 249 for nine.

In reply, the Black Caps' innings never found its bearings against India's four-pronged spin attack. Barring its star batter Kane Williamson, who made a gritty 81 (120b, 7x4), the others appeared clueless against the wily Varun.

Hardik provided the breakthrough when he had Rachin Ravindra caught ramping one to third-man. Varun then had Will Young playing one onto his stumps.

Kuldeep had Daryl Mitchell trapped in front, while Ravindra Jadeja accounted for Tom Latham. Varun then took centrestage in his second spell, removing the dangerous Glenn Phillips and Michael Bracewell in successive overs.

Both batters misread the googly and were struck on the pads as the Kiwis slumped to 159 for six. Once Axar had Williamson stumped, the final piece of resistance ended and Varun cleaned up the tail to claim his maiden five-for in only his second ODI.

Earlier, India's top-order had its first off-day here as Matt Henry (8-0-42-5) struck twice in the Power-Play to leave the Men in Blue in a spot of bother at 30 for three after they were asked to bat.

Virat Kohli, playing his 300th ODI, could not build on his century from the previous match and fell for 11 when his square cut off Henry found an acrobatic Phillips at backward point, who pouched a stunner diving to his right to leave the former shell-shocked.

Shreyas and Axar Patel (42) then steadied the ship, forging a 98-run partnership (136 balls) for the fourth wicket. Axar broke the shackles when he swept Mitchell Santner to the fence. In the next over, Shreyas smashed Will O'Rourke for three boundaries, including a clean lofted drive over covers on either side of two well-timed pulls. The Mumbai batter stepped up a gear once he reached the 50-run mark, smashing a few sixes before falling to a bouncer from O'Rourke. At 182 for six, India's innings was in trouble but Hardik gave it the much-needed momentum in the last 10 overs.

Varun then took over.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA

Rohit Sharma c Young b Jamieson 15 *(17b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Shubman Gill lbw b Henry 2 *(7b)*, Virat Kohli c Phillips b Henry 11 *(14b, 2x4)*, Shreyas Iyer c Young b O'Rourke 79 *(98b, 4x4, 2x6)*, Axar Patel c Williamson b Ravindra 42 *(61b, 3x4, 1x6)*, K.L. Rahul c Latham b Santner 23 *(29b, 1x4)*, Hardik Pandya c Ravindra b Henry 45 *(45b, 4x4, 2x6)*, Ravindra Jadeja c Williamson b Henry 16 *(20b, 1x4)*, Mohammed Shami c Phillips b Henry 5 *(8b)*, Kuldeep Yadav (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (b-1, w-9): 10; Total (for nine wkts. in 50 overs): 249.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-15 (Gill, 2.5 overs), 2-22 (Rohit, 5.1), 3-30 (Kohli, 6.4), 4-128 (Axar, 29.2), 5-172 (Shreyas, 36.2), 6-182 (Rahul, 39.1), 7-223 (Jadeja, 45.5), 8-246 (Hardik, 49.3), 9-249 (Shami, 49.6).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING

Henry 8-0-42-5, Jamieson 8-0-31-1, O'Rourke 9-0-47-1, Santner 10-1-41-1, Bracewell 9-0-56-0, Ravindra 6-0-31-1.

NEW ZEALAND

Will Young b Varun 22 *(35b, 3x4)*, Rachin Ravindra c Axar b Hardik 6 *(12b)*, Kane Williamson st. Rahul b Axar 81 *(120b, 7x4)*, Daryl Mitchell lbw b Kuldeep 17 *(35b, 1x4)*, Tom Latham lbw b Jadeja 14 *(20b)*, Glenn Phillips lbw b Varun 12 *(8b, 1x6)*, Michael Bracewell lbw b Varun 2 *(3b)*, Mitchell Santner b Varun 28 *(31b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Matt Henry c Kohli b Varun 2 *(4b)*, Kyle Jamieson (not out) 9 *(4b, 1x6)*, Will O'Rourke b Kuldeep 1 *(2b)*; Extras (lb-2, w-8, nb-1): 11; Total (in 45.3 overs): 205.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-17 (Ravindra, 3.6), 2-49 (Young, 11.3), 3-93 (Mitchell, 25.1), 4-133 (Latham, 32.2), 5-151 (Phillips, 35.4), 6-159 (Bracewell, 37.1), 7-169 (Williamson, 40.6), 8-195 (Santner, 44.2), 9-196 (Henry, 44.4).

INDIA BOWLING

Shami 4-0-15-0, Hardik 4-0-22-1, Axar 10-0-32-1, Varun 10-0-42-5, Kuldeep 9.3-0-56-2, Jadeja 8-0-36-1.

Toss: India; **PoM:** Varun.
India won by 44 runs.

Varun exorcises ghosts of the past with deadly spell

S. Dipak Ragav
DUBAI

From zero to hero: Varun, who had a forgettable 2021 T20 World Cup in Dubai, returned to the Ring of Fire in style. ANI

Varun Chakaravarthy admitted he was overwhelmed by emotion during his first spell against New Zealand at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Sunday as he did not have fond memories of the venue.

"During that first spell, I was a bit nervous because of what happened four years ago. That was playing on my mind and I was trying to keep it under control. But Virat, Rohit and Hardik told me to calm down. They were constantly talking to me, and it helped," said Varun.

"In 2021, I didn't have a great tournament here. I thought I bowled decently but the results were not good then. All is good now," he added.

The 33-year-old felt that playing in the Vijay Hazare Trophy (VHT) the past two seasons had sharpened his game in the 50-over format.

"The way I sequence my deliveries and construct an over is different in one-dayers. It (VHT) helped me understand when I can bowl a specific kind of delivery and gave me a sense of when to bowl what... this is different to what I am used to in T20s," he said.

Final points table

Group A

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
India (Q)	3	3	0	0	6	0.715
New Zealand (Q)	3	2	1	0	4	0.267
Bangladesh	3	0	2	1	1	-0.443
Pakistan	3	0	2	1	1	-1.087

Group B

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
South Africa (Q)	3	2	0	1	5	2.395
Australia (Q)	3	1	0	2	4	0.475
Afghanistan	3	1	1	1	3	-0.990
England	3	0	3	0	0	-1.159

Q: Qualified

The knockout phase

March 4: Semifinal 1: India vs Australia, *Dubai*
March 5: Semifinal 2: New Zealand vs South Africa, *Lahore*
March 9: Final

All matches start at 2.30 p.m. IST

In the nick of time: Chhetri scored from the spot in the 90th minute as Bengaluru FC earned a draw. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Chhetri's goal ends EB's playoff chances

ISL

Amitabha Das Sharma
KOLKATA

Skipper Sunil Chhetri's penalty in the last minute helped Bengaluru FC hold a 10-man East Bengal to a 1-1 draw in a penultimate round ISL-11 match at the Salt Lake Stadium here on Sunday.

East Bengal established an early lead through its Cameroonian forward Raphael Messi Bouli which was cancelled out in the nick of time by Chhetri.

The result saw Bengaluru FC retain its third spot (38 points in 23 matches) while East Bengal's playoff chances (28 in 23) ended and it remained eighth.

In the 11th minute, Bouli put the host ahead with an opportunistic strike as the ball reached him after a duel between East Bengal midfielder Saul Crespo and Bengaluru defender Lalremtluanga Fanai. East Bengal pierced through the Bengaluru defence once again towards the end of the session but Dimitrios Diamantakos couldn't put it past goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.

The Greek striker received the marching orders in the added time of the first period for headbutting BFC's Spanish midfielder Alberto Noguera.

BFC, searching for the equaliser, was denied till the 90th minute before it was awarded a penalty when East Bengal defender Nishu Kumar was penalised for handling the ball. Chhetri converted it without fuss.

The result: East Bengal 1 (Bouli 11) drew with Bengaluru FC 1 (Chhetri 90-pen).

Barca eases to the top, Atleti noses ahead of Real

Thundering strike: Araujo heads in Barcelona's third against Sociedad. GETTY IMAGES

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
MADRID

Barcelona returned to the top of the LaLiga table with a comfortable 4-0 home victory over 10-man Real Sociedad on Sunday.

Barcelona's seventh straight league win helped it climb to the No. 1 spot with 57 points from 26 games, one ahead of Atletico Madrid.

Defending champion Real Madrid is third with 54 points after a 2-1 defeat at Real Betis on Saturday.

Atletico Madrid scraped a nervy 1-0 win over Athletic Bilbao.

Diego Simeone's side capitalised at the Metropolitano stadium, thanks to Julian Alvarez's second-half strike.

The Basque side, fourth, hit the woodwork three times in the hunt for an equaliser but Atletico held on to move top.

Isco strikes

Isco scored the winner for Betis from the penalty spot against his former side.

Earlier, the visitors took the lead at the Benito Villamarin stadium through Brahim Diaz but Betis struck back with a Johnny Cardoso header.

Philip Billing kept Napoli right on Inter Milan's tail at the top of Serie A after scoring a late equaliser in Saturday's exciting 1-1 draw in Naples.

Bayer Leverkusen cut Bayern Munich's lead in the Bundesliga back to eight points ahead of the sides' Champions League last 16 clash, with a 4-1 win at Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday.

The results: LaLiga: Leganes 1 (Garcia 90+2) bt Getafe 0; Barcelona 4 (Martin 25, Casado 29, Araujo 56, Lewandowski 60) bt Real Sociedad 0.

On Saturday: LaLiga: Girona 2 (Tsygankov 21, Herrera 68) drew with Celta Vigo 2 (Losada 36, Alonso 51-pen); Rayo Vallecano 1 (Ratiu 55) drew with Sevilla 1 (Lukebakio 81); Real Betis 2 (Cardoso 34, Isco 54-pen) bt Real Madrid 1 (Diaz 10); Atletico Madrid 1 (Alvarez 66) bt Athletic Bilbao 0.

Serie A: Napoli 1 (Billing 87) drew with Inter Milan 1 (Dimarco 22); Udinese 1 (Thauvin 38-pen) bt Parma 0.

Bundesliga: Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Ekitike 37) lost to Bayer Leverkusen 4 (Tella 26, Mukiele 29, Schick 33, Garcia 62).

Memorable campaign: The Vidarbha players and support staff celebrate the victory. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Vidarbha completes a well-deserved triumph

Karnewar and Nalkande's eighth-wicket stand ends Kerala's slim hopes on the final day; the host wins its third title in seven years; Eden's performance on return augurs well for the runner-up

RANJI TROPHY FINAL

P.K. Ajith Kumar
NAGPUR

There was no miracle. There was only the affirmation: Vidarbha is a major force in Indian domestic cricket.

Akshay Wadkar's men won their third Ranji Trophy in seven years, beating Kerala in the final on first-innings lead at the VCA Stadium on Sunday. They had begun the final day leading by 286 runs with six wickets in hand.

Kerala's only hope was a spectacular collapse by Vidarbha. But, the host was in no mood to oblige. The first-time finalist did manage to get the centurion Karun Nair (135, 295b, 400m, 10x4, 2x6) out early, and then two more batters, but Akshay Karnewar and Darshan Nalkande stayed long enough to bat Kerala out of the match.

The two teams signed peace towards the end of the second session, after Nalkande completed his fifty. Vidarbha's score at the time read 375 for nine – an overall lead of 412.

Earlier, Vidarbha resumed at the overnight 249 for four, but suffered a setback when Karun fell to Aditya Sarwate in the seventh over of the day.

The batter stepped out and tried to play the ball to the on-side only to be beaten by the turn, and was stumped.

Before long, Harsh Dubey was trapped in front by a fuller faster ball from Eden Apple Tom, whose bowling, on his return to the team after three years, was probably the biggest positive for Kerala in the final. Then, in the following over, Sarwate, who was the hero of Vidarbha in the 2018-19 Ranji Trophy final on this very ground, cleaned up Wadkar.

Vidarbha thus slid to 283 for seven.

A chance

Sachin Baby's men sensed an opportunity, as the lead was 320 and there was still time for a chase if they could get the remaining wickets quickly.

But Karnewar (30) and Nalkande (51 not out) showed why Vidarbha has been such a resilient side this season, blunting the Kerala attack for more than 20 overs. It was indeed a disappointing end for Kerala, which surprised everyone with its march to the final.

For Vidarbha, it was a much-deserved victory. And there was a small crowd to celebrate their moment of joy.

The scores:

Vidarbha — 1st Innings: 379.

Kerala — 1st Innings: 342.

Vidarbha — 2nd Innings: Parth Rekhade b Jalaj 1, Dhruv Shorey c Azharuddeen b Nidheesh 5, Danish Malewar c Baby b Akshay 73, Karun Nair st. Azharuddeen b Sarwate 135, Yash Rathod lbw b Sarwate 24, Akshay Wadkar b Sarwate 25, Harsh Dubey lbw b Eden 4, Akshay Karnewar b Basil 30, Darshan Nalkande (not out) 51, Nachiket Bhute lbw b Sarwate 3, Yash Thakur (not out) 8; Extras (b-5, lb-9, nb-2) 16; Total (for nine wkts. in 143.5 overs): 375.

Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-7, 3-189, 4-238, 5-259, 6-279, 7-283, 8-331, 9-346.

Kerala bowling: Nidheesh 15-3-48-1, Jalaj 50-11-109-1, Eden 14-0-57-1, Sarwate 44.5-12-96-4, Basil 7-2-18-1, Akshay 13-2-33-1.

PoM: Malewar.

PoS: Dubey.

Vidarbha coach Ghani hails collective effort

P.K. Ajith Kumar
NAGPUR

After the heartbreak of last year, it was a dream-come-true moment for Usman Ghani.

"It has indeed been a dream to hold this magnificent trophy," the Vidarbha coach said after beating Kerala on the first-innings lead in the Ranji Trophy final at the VCA Stadium on Sunday.

"We missed it by a whisker last year."

He said the preparations had started last year itself, working on the areas that needed improvement. "We really worked hard on our batting," he said. "We didn't depend on individuals, and everyone contributed."

Young batters like Danish Malewar and Yash Rathod really impressed. "I had a lot of faith in Danish and asked the selectors to play him in the eleven," Ghani said. "He had done well with the Under-23 team and I felt he was ready for the bigger stage. As for Yash, he is a very matured, skilful player. It is an honour for the team that he is the highest run-getter in the Ranji Trophy this season."

The highest wicket-taker is also from Vidarbha. Harsh Dubey, in fact, set a new record for the highest number of wickets in a Ranji season (69). "He has a lot of self-belief, which is very important," said Ghani. "He also did well with the bat."

He admitted Vidarbha was surprised by Kerala's decision to bowl first after winning the toss.

"We wanted to bat first in a pressure game like this, we knew it was a batting wicket though it could be difficult in the first hour because of the moisture," he said. "We were very happy when Kerala asked us to bat first."

He paid a tribute to Akshay Wakhare who retired from First Class cricket. "He has been a great servant of Vidarbha cricket," he said. "It was only on the morning of the match that he told us that he was going to retire".

Special feeling: Vidarbha players savour the winning moment. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

One that got away: It was so near yet so far for Baby and Kerala. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Baby admits his dismissal was the turning point

P.K. Ajith Kumar
NAGPUR

> That shot was not on my mind, actually, maybe it was a brain-fade moment

Sachin Baby has no qualms to admit that his slog-sweep was a turning point in the Ranji Trophy final.

He had been batting brilliantly up until that moment, leading Kerala's spirited chase for the first-innings lead against Vidarbha. After he was caught at deep midwicket, Kerala's reply to the host's 379 ended 37 runs behind.

"If I take credit for the success, I will take the blame for failure, too," Baby said. "Nobody plays a shot to get out," he said. "That shot was not on my mind, actually, maybe it was a brain-fade moment. But on this wicket, you had to play shots. If I had played too defensively, there would have been pressure on the team and myself."

He said he was proud of Kerala's journey to a historic Ranji Trohy final. "But we have to improve still," he said. "I was telling the team about how Vidarbha came back from the defeat in last year's final to win the trophy this year. "

About Kerala's decision to bowl first after winning the toss, he said that was because of the conditions. "We saw the wicket was green and moist, and we were playing an extra seamer," he said. "And we did get three wickets, but Vidarbha played smart cricket, changing their batting order. We still were in the game till the final day. We were confident we could chase a target had we got them out early in the morning."

Baby is particularly pleased with the way the 19-year-old Eden Apple Tom bowled. "I had captained Eden on his debut at Rajok three years ago," he said. "I had been requesting (the selectors) to pick him in the team. At the nets, he was bowling the kind of lengths that international bowlers do. He has pace and movement. He will take more than 200 wickets for Kerala".

Holt overpowers Mochizuki, clinches his second Challenger title

BENGALURU OPEN

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

Brandon Holt's two-week India sojourn had the sweetest of endings as he clinched the Bengaluru Open singles title with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Shintaro Mochizuki at the KLSTA courts here on Sunday.

It was only Holt's second ATP Challenger title – both of which have come this year – and he will be richer by $28,400. But most importantly, the 125 points earned - along with the 50 he received for a runner-up finish in Pune - will leave the 26-year-old on the cusp of the top-100 in Monday's rankings, a new career high.

"It's my first time in India and it has been great," Holt told the sizeable weekend crowd after the victory. "The energy of the fans has always been high. Thank you so much."

For Mochizuki, the defeat was his first in three Challenger finals, and by the end of the match, he was teary-eyed and seemed thoroughly broken. Perhaps he thought he deserved more for the intent he showed all evening. The Japanese player went for the lines repeatedly but his inability to hit through the court meant Holt got to nearly every single ball.

The American played to a plan - to keep the ball in play, draw mistakes from Mochizuki and pull the occasional trigger. And this strategy worked like a dream, but for a fleeting game or two. In the first set, Holt broke in the second and sixth games, and Mochizuki got a consolation break in the seventh.

Sweet victory: The triumph will leave Holt on the cusp of the top-100. SUDHAKARA JAIN

In the second stanza, Mochizuki, more than once, tried to advance into the court and execute a meaty drive to breach Holt's defence. But it didn't work, and even proved his undoing at crucial times – on break-point in the third game when Holt broke and on break-point in the eighth game when Holt held. On his part, Holt hit with style and panache when he absolutely had to, like the thunderous inside-out forehand to break in the opening game of the second set.

The final straw for Mochizuki was the break in the ninth game. Serving to stay in the contest, the 21-year-old dumped two consecutive double-faults to give Holt a match-point. A misjudged overhead that crashed into the net brought the curtains down.

Seven-minute VAR check rules out goal despite semi-automatic offside system

FA CUP

Associated Press
BOURNEMOUTH

It took more than seven minutes for the video-assistant referee to rule out a goal during FA Cup game between Bournemouth and Wolves despite a new semi-automatic offside system being trialled in the competition.

Milos Kerkez thought he had put Bournemouth 2-0 up in the first half with a header from a corner on Saturday, but the ball came off teammate Dean Huijsen – who was in an offside position – before going into the net.

A semi-automatic offside system is being used for the first time in English football in the fifth round of the competition, but rights-holder BBC reported that the technology could not be used for the incident as there was also a check for a possible handball.

Decision pending: The semi-automatic offside system could not be used for the incident as there was also a check for a possible handball. AP

Manual review

That meant the VAR had to review the situation manually before finally ruling that the goal should not stand – seven minutes after the ball had gone into the net. During the lengthy delay, fans from both teams were chanting "It's not football anymore."

The VAR system has been widely criticised for creating lengthy stoppages during games, but it's rare for any check to last longer than a couple of minutes.

The semi-automated offside system is meant to speed up such decisions, with officials having said it would reduce the average time needed to check for offside to 31 seconds.

After the game finished in a 1-1 draw, Bournemouth went on to win a penalty shootout 5-4 to reach the quarterfinals.

Pragg joins Aravindh in the lead

PRAGUE MASTERS

Press Trust of India
PRAGUE

Grandmaster R. Praggnanandhaa scored his second victory on the trot, outwitting Vincent Keymer of Germany to join compatriot Aravindh Chithambaram at the top on three points after the end of the fourth round of the Prague Masters here.

Aravindh survived some early hiccups before signing peace with Sam Shankland while top seed Wei Yi finally found his form at the expense of home star David Navara.

Praggnanandhaa. AP

Anish Giri played out his fourth draw in as many games with Gurel Ediz, while Nguyen Thai Dai Van also drew with Quang Leim Le of Vietnam in the other two games of the 10-player round-robin tournament.

With Praggnanadhaa and Aravindh in front, Shankland, Keymer, Giri and Le share the third spot a full point behind with five rounds still to come.

In the challengers' section, Divya Deshmukh played out a draw with Ma Qun of China and took her tally to 1.5 points from four games.

Nodirbek Yakubboev of Uzbekistan and Jonas Buhl Bjerre of Denmark, who both have three points apiece, are in joint lead.

The results:

Round 4: Aravindh Chithambaram (3) drew with Sam Shankland (USA, 2); Vincent Keymer (Ger, 2) lost to R. Praggnanandhaa (3); Wei Yi (Chn, 1.5) bt David Navara (Cze, 1.5); Gurel Ediz (Tur, 1.5) drew with Anish Giri (Ned, 2) Nguyen Thai Dai Van (Cze, 1.5) drew with Quang Leim Le (Vie, 2).

Challengers: Stamatis Kourkoulous-Arditis (Ger, 1.5) drew with Ivan Salgado Lopez (Esp, 2); Vaclav Finek (Cze, 1.5) lost to Marc` Andria Maurizzi (Fra, 2); Divya Deshmukh (1.5) drew with Ma Qun (Chn, 2); Jonas Buhl Bzerre (Den, 3) drew with Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzb, 3); Nemec Jychym (Cze, 1.5) lost to Richard Stalmach (Cze, 1.5).

Watch out! Teams will be keeping an eye on the season's trends to avoid a surprise. K. MURALI KUMAR

Warriorz coach Lewis downplays the toss factor

As the third edition's caravan moves to Lucknow, 12 of the 14 games have been won by chasing sides; struggling GG needs a win against the host

WPL

Vivek Krishnan
LUCKNOW

From afar, the outcome of the coin toss at this year's Women's Premier League (WPL) seems to have had an excessive influence on results.

While the trend of teams batting second winning more games in the slam-bang version isn't new, 12 of the 14 games in WPL's third edition witnessing the chasing team prevail suggests that the fate of these franchises is hinging too heavily on a matter of plain luck.

On the eve of the clash against Gujarat Giants (GG) at the Ekana Stadium here, though, UP Warriorz coach Jon Lewis stayed away from giving too much importance to the role of the toss. Perhaps because it is the only side to win a game batting first this season, against Delhi Capitals in Bengaluru.

"From the results, it seems like the decisive factor. From my point of view, it is not really so. It is about who plays the best cricket. Regardless of what happens with the toss, though it seems like batting second is an advantage, it doesn't feel to me like the most crucial thing," Lewis said in the pre-match presser on Sunday.

"We haven't quite clicked. We have had some individual moments. We have got a lot of power. What I would like is for our team to be slightly more consistent, especially through the middle part of the game. If we do that, I don't think the toss will be relevant."

GG is placed at the bottom of the table with four points after five outings despite beating defending champion Royal Challengers Bengaluru in its previous fixture.

Vital

"The win against RCB was crucial to keep us very much in the competition. Other than DC, it is very even at the moment.

"Every game is crucial for all teams now," said Giants coach Michael Klinger.

Points table

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Delhi Capitals (Q)	7	5	2	10	0.482
Mumbai Indians	5	3	2	6	0.166
UP Warriorz	5	2	3	4	-0.124
Royal Challengers	6	2	4	4	-0.244
Gujarat Giants	5	2	3	4	-0.450

Q: Qualified

Commendable: From being considered gritty minnows, Afghanistan is now a decent force. GETTY IMAGES

WI should take leaf out of Afghanistan's book: Richards

CHAMPIONS TROPHY

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

"Annoyed" and "hurt" with the absence of West Indies in the Champions Trophy, the legendary Sir Vivian Richards wants the Caribbean side to take a leaf out of Afghanistan's book to re-establish itself as a force in world cricket.

West Indies and Sri Lanka, the two former ODI World Cup and Champions Trophy winning sides, failed to make the cut for the eight-team event being played in Pakistan and Dubai.

"I'm just hoping that my West Indies team can take a leaf out of these guys' book, because there is a passion and energy that the Afghanis have brought to the game," Richards, who is the governing council member of the International Masters League, told media on Sunday.

"They haven't been in the cricket world for so long as maybe some other teams around the world, but just their fighting spirit.

"To me, the ability to learn as the years go by, that would have given them the experience that's needed in order for them to be where they're at," he said in a virtual interaction.

"When you can see Afghanistan in the Champions League, and the West Indies not, it means that Afghanistan is doing something right," he said.

Considered gritty minnows not long ago, Afghanistan has now become a decent force in the Asian region on the back of some consistent showing.

Richards said West Indies will need efforts from everyone involved, not just the players, to improve. Apart from missing the ongoing Champions Trophy, the West Indies had also not taken part in the 2023 ODI World Cup in India.

The belief factor is strong at Mumbai Indians: Kerr

Vivek Krishnan
LUCKNOW

From being a precocious talent in her teens to winning the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year award for 2024, Amelia Kerr has undertaken a fulfilling journey to the summit in the past decade.

The status of the best women's cricketer in the world was bestowed upon the 24-year-old in recognition of her all-round brilliance in New Zealand's ground-breaking T20 World Cup triumph in the United Arab Emirates in October 2024.

Besides finishing as the tournament's highest wicket-taker with 15 scalps in six matches with her bamboozling leg-breaks and googlies, she also contributed 135 runs at No. 3. In the final, she hit 43 and snaffled three wickets.

As is the nature of the very best cricketers, she has moved on from that high to focus on the task of helping Mumbai Indians march into the final of the third edition of the Women's Premier League (WPL).

Part of the franchise from the inaugural 2023 season when it lifted the trophy, she is confident of another tilt at the title. MI is second in the standings behind Delhi Capitals.

Current mission: All-rounder Kerr is focused on helping MI make the final of the third edition of the WPL. K. MURALI KUMAR

Well-balanced team

"We have got a really well-balanced team. We are in a good position. We have got important games coming up. Obviously, we have won this competition before. So there is that belief factor," Kerr told *The Hindu* in a virtual interaction on Sunday.

As the WPL caravan moves to the Ekana stadium in Lucknow, a city known for its culinary delights and *tehzeeb* (etiquette), Kerr's leg-spin offering may flourish more than it did in Vadodara and Bengaluru. The pitches at this venue have leaned towards encouraging turn previously.

"I have no idea what to expect in Lucknow. I have never been here previously. In women's cricket now, there is travel around the world for different leagues and for New Zealand and you have to adapt. I don't look too much into conditions. But adapting obviously is really important if there is a huge difference in the pitches," she said.

So far in this campaign, she has just bubbled under the radar and not quite matched her usual standards. "Each time I go out, I try to contribute where I can and get in the fight. I have probably missed out a couple of times with the bat, but cricket is a very fickle game and it is just about turning up for the next one and trying to compete."

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Dravid and son Anvay put up healthy stand for Vijaya CC (Malur)

Playing his second game of the tournament, former India captain Rahul Dravid forged a healthy partnership with his son Anvay for Vijaya CC (Malur) in the KSCA Group I, Division III league at Kreeda Kshetra ground here on Sunday.

Facing Jayanagar Cricketers, Rahul entered to bat with his side in trouble at 12 for three. Rahul and Anvay put on 43 runs in 66 balls. Rahul retired hurt on 29 from 28 balls, with six fours.

Vijaya CC finished the 50-over contest on 149. Jayanagar Cricketers chased the target with five wickets to spare, in 31.3 overs.

'Cauvery Express' takes the honours in KPL 6.0

The team of 'Cauvery Express' won the sixth edition of the Karnataka Golf Association Premier League (KPL 6.0).

'Cauvery Express' totalled 288 points in the closely fought title round, edging out the team of 'Golden Eagles' by four points.

A further seven points adrift were 'Rosetta By Ferns', who finished with a total of 277 points in the ten team title round.

Keven Fernandes, from 'Rosetta By Ferns', was declared the'Most Valuable Player'.

LIVE TELECAST

WPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

ISL: Sports 18-3 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

Serie A: gxr. world, 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)

LaLiga: gxr. world, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

INBRIEF

Rithvik and Barrientos duo wins ATP doubles title in Chile

Rithvik Bollipalli and Nicolas Barrientos of Colombia outplayed top seeds Maximo Gonzalez and Andres Molteni of Argentina 6-3, 6-2 in the doubles final of the $710,735 ATP tennis tournament on clay in Santiago, Chile. It was the 14th career doubles title for the 24-year-old Rithvik, ranked 74 in the world. The champion team won 250 ATP points and $35,980.

Ex-criminal Peake qualifies for British Open golf

Former Australian motorcycle gang member-turned-golfer Ryan Peake, who served a lengthy jail term for assault, produced a maiden win at New Zealand Open on Sunday to qualify for this year's British Open.

Marc edges brother Alex in MotoGP season opener

Six-time World champion Marc Marquez fought back from a mid-race wobble to outduel his brother Alex Marquez for a win in Sunday's season-opening Thai MotoGP in Buriram. The Spanish great took his 63rd MotoGP victory by 1.732sec from Alex, with Francesco Bagnaia third.

Classy Redefined races to glory in the Indian Turf Invitation Cup

Shamrock pegs back the challenge of favourite Santissimo to win the Major P. K. Mehra Memorial Super Mile

RACING

Cyrus J. Madan
H. Kamal Khan
CHENNAI

Redefined, the dark bay 4-year-old son of Phoenix Tower out of Symi, lived up to his name and rewrote to script to win the HPSL Royal Arion Indian Turf Invitation Cup (Gr. 1)

Trained to perfection by Prasanna Kumar, and ridden with supreme confidence by the English professional David Allan. he had over five long lengths to spare to Dyf, who in turn was a shade ahead of owner-mate Duke Of Tuscany.

Allan's win chalked up a second Invitation Cup victory for him, after the 2016 success on Desert God here in Chennai. Of the 13 Invitation Cups that have been run in Chennai, a foreign jockey has come up trumps eight times.

Prasanna produced a reinvented bay gelding who showed that the rest after the Bangalore Derby, where he finished second, had brought him on tremendously.

He put his reputation on the line when he went on record in the press conference a few days earlier to state that Redefined was his best runner of the weekend. And he was spot on!

Two races earlier, Shamrock, by Excellent Art out of Nora, trained by Satish Narredu, and brilliantly ridden by jockey Suraj Narredu pegged back the challenge of favourite Santissimo, to win the Major P. K. Mehra Memorial Super Mile.

Suraj showed remarkable tactical brilliance when he sat behind the front-running African Gold, never allowing Santissimo with Oisin Murphy to creep past him on his inside. It allowed him first run on Shamrock and that slender lead, gained about 400 metres from home, made all the difference. This was Suraj at his brilliant best and Shamrock rose to the occasion.

One for the album: The chairman of the Madras Race Club Muthiah Ramaswamy (right), along with Redefined's trainer Prasanna Kumar (third from right), HPSL chairman Suresh Paladugu (seated right of the trophy), jockey David Allan, co-owners Ram Shroff (second from right), Ashok Ranpise (behind Paladugu) and Surendra Ramchandra Sanas (blue jacket), HRC chairman R. Surender Reddy (behind Allan), and other dignitaries pose with the majestic Invitation Cup. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

THE RESULTS:

1. JAPAN CUP (2,000M): ROYAL NOBILITY (Farid Ansari) 1, Kallania (N. Darshan) 2, Gold Fame (P. Vikram) 3 and Edmund (M.S. Deora) 4. 7-1/4, 1-1/4 and 2. 2m, 7.15s. ₹26 (w), 15 and 23 (p), SHP: 38, THP: 51, FP: 91, Q: 65, Tla: 451. Owner: Mr. A.C. Muthiah. Trainer: R. Foley.

2. OLYMPIA TECH PARK MILLION (1,600M): MAGIC MAYNE (Antony Raj) 1, Zuri (P. Trevor) 2, Emphatic (G. Vivek) 3 and Golden Warrior (Yash Narredu) 4. 1/2, shd and 2-3/4. 1m, 37.87s. ₹49 (w), 14, 18 and 15 (p), SHP: 82, THP: 57, FP: 299, Q: 139, Tla: 594. Owners: Mr. Eugene Aloysious Mayne & Mrs. Joan Mayne. Trainer: Kishan Thomas.

3. AVT CENTENARY MILLION (1,200M): ECHOES OF TIME (Hindu Singh) 1, Merlet (K. Mukesh Kumar) 2, Sweet Redemption (Suraj Narredu) 3 and Vibrant Bliss (P. Trevor) 4. 1, hd and 2. 1m, 11.69s. ₹34 (w), 19 and 43 (p), SHP: 82, THP: 43, FP: 235, Q: 195, Tla: 576. Owner: Mr. A.C. Muthiah. Trainer: Vijay Singh.

4. SURESH MAHINDRA MULTI MILLION TROPHY (GR. II) (1,400M): KNOTTY CHARMER (Antony Raj) 1, Prana (Suraj Narredu) 2, Siege Courageous (David Allan) 3 Kalamisti (Srinath) 4. 2, shd and 1-1/4. 1m, 22.54s. ₹134 (w), 49, 18 and 15 (p), SHP: 68, THP: 118, FP: 1156, Q: 463, Tla: 3,858. Owners: Mr. K. Kamesh, Mr. Srikanth Badruka, Mr. N. Swaroop Kumar, Mr. K. Balamukunda Das, Mr. Dharmesh Mehta, Mr. M.N. Nambiar & Mr. D. Sanjeev Basapa. Trainer: Prasanna.

5. MAJ. P.K. MEHRA MEMORIAL SUPER MILE (GR. I) (1,600M): SHAMROCK (Suraj Narredu) 1, Sanrissimo (Oisin Murphy) 2, African Gold (P. Trevor) 3 and Iron Clad (Srinath) 4. 3/4, 2 and 1-1/2. 1m, 35.69s. ₹125 (w), 24, 10 and 11 (p), SHP: 35, THP: 38, FP: 684, Q: 143, Tla: 945. Owners: Mr. Ravi, Mr. Daulat Chhabria, Mr. K. Kaliyaperumal & Mrs. R. Chellam. Trainer: S. Narredu.

Proud moment: Owners M. Ravi and wife Chellam Ravi, Daulat Chhabria, third from left, trainer Satish Narredu, right, along with Sweta and Srinivasa leading in Shamrock (Suraj Narredu astride) after the success in the Maj. P.K. Mehra Memorial Super Mile Cup. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

6. ROYAL WESTERN INDIA TURF CLUB MILLION (1,200M): RICARDO (C. Umesh) 1, Czar (Antony Raj) 2, Star Glory (Suraj Narredu) 3 and Dedicate (Hindu Singh) 4. Not run: Never Give In. 2-1/2, 1 and 1/2. 1m, 9.99s. ₹31 (w), 10, 16 and 11 (p), SHP: 68, THP: 36, FP: 208, Q: 142, Tla: 513. Owners: Mr. Haider Soomar, Arun Alagappan Racing rep. by Arun Alagappan, Mr. Chandrakanth Kankaria & Mukteshwar Stud. Trainer: Arjun Manlorkar.

7. HPSL ROYAL ARION INDIAN TURF INVITATION CUP (GR. I) (2,400M): REDEFINED (Phoenix Tower-Symi) David Allan 1, DYF (Cougar Mountain-Soak) P. Trevor 2, DUKE OF TUSCANY (Cougar Mountain-Nicollini) Oisin Murphy 3 and POSITANO (Arod-Satinette) Akshay Kumar 4. 5-1/4, 3/4 and lnk. 2m, 28.39s. ₹98 (w), 19, 18 and 29 (p), SHP: 35, THP: 109, FP: 512, Q: 196. Tlan: 3,325. Owners: Mr. Ashok Ranpise, Mr. Surendra Ramchandra Sanas, M/s. DT Racing & Breeders, Mr. P. Prasanna Kumar, Mr. Kamesh K & M/s. Stride Livestock. Trainer: Prasanna.

8. HYDERABAD RACE CLUB MILLION (1,200M): DEL AVIZ (Akshay Kumar) 1, Divine Star (G. Vivek) 2, Gold Ride (David Allan) 3 and Cache (Neeraj) 4. 1, 7 3/4 and 1-3/4. 1m,10.50s. ₹56 (w), 17, 13 and 14 (p), SHP: 44, THP: 45, FP: 232, Q: 132, Tla: 900. Owners: Hyperion Bloodstock rep. by Mr. & Mrs. Farouq K. Rattonsey, Mr. Sameer F. Rottonsey and Mr. Zaqheer F. Rattonsey, Mr. Nitin Himmatmal Jain & Mr. Jatin Laxmikant Trivedi. Trainer: S. Attaollahi.

Jkt: ₹1,41,539 (9 tkts.), Runner-up: 15,598 (35 tkts.), Mini Jkt: 12,145 (29 tkts.), Tr (i): 6142 (38 tkts.), (ii): 730 (503 tkts.).

Krishna Jayasankar creates indoor record in shot put

ATHLETICS

Sports Bureau

Krishna Jayasankar became the new record-holder in indoor shot put among the Indian women.

The 22-year-old, studying in USA, threw a distance of 16.03m in the Mountain West Indoor track and field championship in Albuquerque (New Mexico) on Saturday to finish third behind Mya Lensar (19.02m) and Gabby Morns (17.09m).

Krishna bettered the previous indoor best of 15.54m set by Poornarao Rane in 2023 in Birmingham, USA.

Krishn, who has now been selected to take part in the NCAA indoor championships to be held on March 14 and 15 in Virginia Beach, is the daughter of former international basketball players Jayasankar Menon and Prasanna.

Krishna Jayasankar (left) finished third

I'm very happy that India is committed to global sport: Coe

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

International Olympic Committee (IOC) president's post contender Sebastian Coe feels India's bid to host the 2036 Olympic Games is a "strong case" but competition will be tough with several other countries throwing their hats in the ring.

India has already submitted a 'Letter of Intent' to host the 2036 Olympics and Paralympic Games to the IOC's Future Host Commission, taking the first concrete step in an ambitious plan after months of informal dialogue with the global sport's apex body.

"Well, you won't be surprised given my background to say that I'm obviously very happy that India is committed to global sport and particularly the Olympic movement. I'm very happy to hear that. And look, it will be very competitive. It won't be the only bidder, but the case that it (India) can make is a very strong case," Coe said.

Coe. AFP

Poland, Indonesia, South Africa, Qatar, Hungary, Turkey, Mexico and Egypt are among other countries which have expressed a desire to host the 2036 Olympics.

The 2036 Games host nation will not be known before 2026. But it is certain that the host will be chosen during the presidency of the winner of the March 20 election of the new IOC chief.

Coe said South Asia, of which India is the major country, has the potential to help grow the Olympic movement further by bringing more young people to sport.

Growth in South Asia

"I have witnessed in the last few years the growing importance of South Asia in athletics, and athletics is the centrepiece of Olympic movement.

"If you and I 10 years ago said to each other that the men's Olympic javelin title would be being fought between athletes from Pakistan and India, I think we both would have smiled at each other and moved on," he said referring to Arshad Nadeem and Neeraj Chopra winning gold and silver respectively in Paris.

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